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THE LEGACY OF JEWISH MUSIC THROUGH THE AGES*

EDITH GERSON-KIWI

THE SOURCE of ancient Jewish music was the Bible. Yet, it is not so long ago that Bible study and, for that matter, anything concerning Biblical music was the exclusive and well-guarded domain of a handful of theologians and linguists. Only when modern archaeology enormously widened the horizon, and the cities, temples, palaces and libraries of Babylon appeared out of the rubble of the past, did general interest spread. Now that the ancient types of inhabitants of these regions as well as the newer ones are both historically and anthropologically well defined, the world of the Bible has once more come to life.

The stones themselves talked, and the Biblical figures have come to live uncannily near us; their modes of life, their poetry and their songs, have become a life picture in our mind. The connection of the present-day Oriental with his ancient past which was generally believed dead, has now become perceptible and real in literature and the plastic arts just as in music. His music already provides material of a certain documentary value which, under favourable conditions, may yet corroborate to an unforeseen extent the sparse historical evidence. No musical notations, nor treatises, have been left to us from Biblical times. Only a very few instruments have survived. But the musical practices of the present-day Iraquis, Persians, Syrians, Kurds and Oriental Turks may, thanks to their static nature, furnish us with the keys to many a buried treasure.

In the midst of the ancient Asiatic cultures, Hebrew musical tradition forms a realm of its own. Israel today, is a people in formation, a community of exiles of all descriptions, and it borders on boldness to try to evaluate the variety of colours in this mosaic of peculiar traditions that have developed during the 2,000 years' exile. Israel has had to forego any continuity in its musical history. It is, as it were, broken info single phases, with tie and space between, leaving us no clues as to their natural continuity. Biblical music may be said to form one of the main phases, the Talmudic period a second, the Spanish-Arabic epoch a third, the ***Hassidic*** a fourth, and so on. But it can be safely assumed that, with the destruction of the Temple in 70 C. E., the culture of instrumental and secular music came to an end and, from then on, musical liturgy became the sole carrier of music, a music that can only be grasped in the light of the diversity of the ***diaspora*** styles, a mixture comparable to curious amalgamations of the native and alien.

Today, with the return of the dispersed communities to the old homeland, there exists a splendid opportunity for the study of the separate traditions, reunited now within 20th century Israel. Today, fifteen years after the foundation of the State of Israel, Jerusalem has representatives of all major communities many made up of Oriental tribes which, for a time, had continued their ancient musical traditions, only to fall-and this

*** From a paper delivered by the author at the First International Conference on Liturgical Music held in Jerusalem in July 1964 called by the Cantors Assembly of America.**

in a surprisingly rapid way-victim to European assimilation. Therefore, there is now only one last opportunity to collect this old Hebraic folklore authentically.

The high age of the styles in Oriental singing is evident. Even the laymsn feels its attraction and is subdued by the originality of its melodies and those sounds which, though belonging to a past world, have nevertheless, throughout the changes and destructions wrought upon our material world in the course of time, retained all their purity. To hear such singers from the Yemen, from Syria, Sameria, or Baghdad, conjures up an impression of coming home to the cradle of all that is music and sound.

In these tunes of ancient times, beauty signifies nothing but the soulfulness and force of its narration mean everything. There are tones which hardly conform to a rational tone-system, as is the case with European music, with their sounds moving outside the normal keys, revealing and symbolizing man and his peculiarities as an ethnic expression.

Before dealing with the particular aspects, let us take a brief look at these old tribes and their musical peculiarities. There are three main ethnic groups:

I. the genuinely Asiatic Jews of the Yemen, Babylon, Syria, Persia and India;

II. the Spanish-Sephardic Jews from all the shores of the Mediterranean;

III. the West-European and the East-European Jewish communities.

I. THE SONG OF THE ASIATIC JEWISH COMMUNITIES

1. Yemen

The numerous Jewish congregations of the Yemen, now united on Israel's soil, look upon a past unusual not only in its historical events, but also in its strong consistency of folk traditions. According to their legends, Jewish communities have lived among the South-Arabian tribes for about 2,500 years, nestled together in small villages or quarters. Here they develop& through the ages an uninterrupted community life, and it is no wonder if they preserved a treasure of musical folklore, side by side with their folk arts and literature. Though there existed, from time to time, connections with the centers of Jewish learning in Palestine or Egypt, the Yemenite Jews, on the whole, remained isolated from foreign influences and retained their ancient style of chanting, singing, dancing, clapping and drumming.

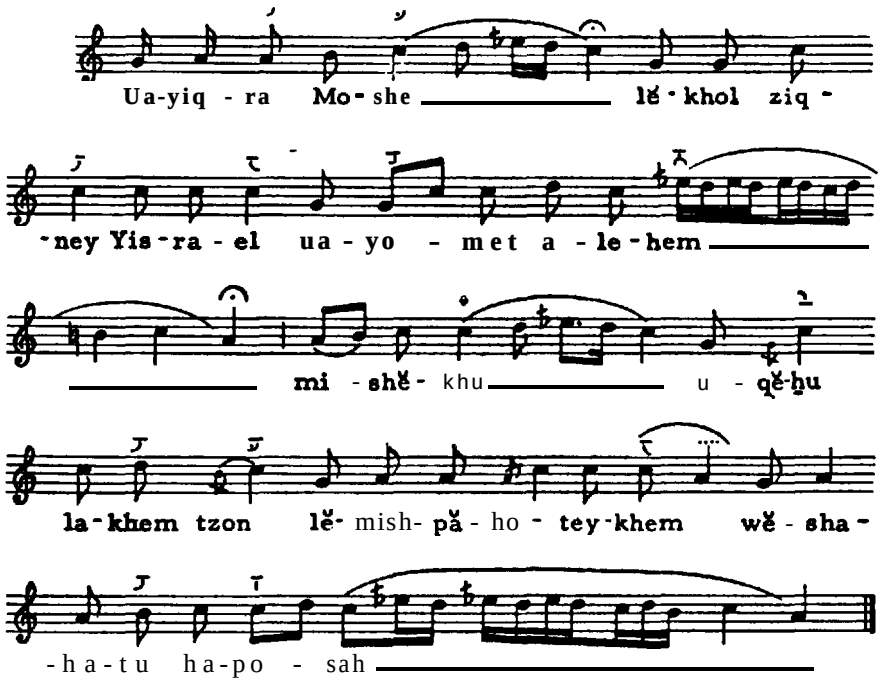
Legend has it that their migration to the Yemen started during the First Temple, ***i.e.*** prior to 587 B.C.E., but archaeological and historical evidence starts only in the third century C.E. They enjoyed a short time of political independence during the 5th and 6th centuries, when the Himyaric Royal. House adopted the Jewish faith, but with the death of the last Himyaric king, the Jew, Joseph Du Nuwas (d. 525 C.E.), and the growth of Islam with its many -fanatical sects, unaccounted sufferings for the Jews began which resulted only in strengthening their Jewish consciousness and their Messianic faith. Their final return to Jerusalem began in 1881/82 and

was concluded in 1949/50 with the transfer of the entire population of Yemenite Jews-including the far-away Hadramoutb-Habanim (ca. 40,006 people) to Israel.

The very age of this tribe, their absolute seclusion from the European sphere of influence, their natural inclination to music, and, in general, their devotion to the Muses, have in fact made them the prototype of a Jewish folk-tradition. A relevant point in this connection is their Bible recitation which, as in other Oriental cults, takes the form of a documentary style with "graces" here and there as syntactical marks, as **in the following:**

Ex. 1: Yemenite Bible Reading

Yemen · Exodus 12:21 (Phon. G-K 1392)



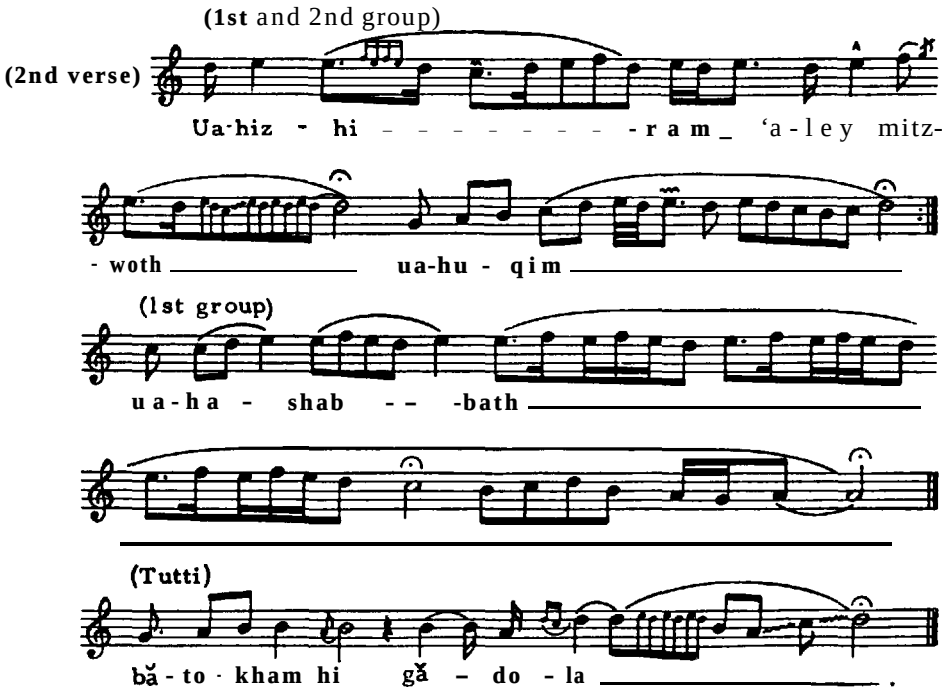
This sort of chanting assured the interpretation of the Holy Script: its words were forever wrapped up in music. Later on, this style of cantillation also provided the key for understanding whenever the origins of the early Christian mode of singing the Psalms and Lessons had to be traced. These were probably the first points of contact between the liturgies of the two world religions.

In the Yemenites' religious home-tunes for the celebration of the Sabbath and the holy days, mostly from the pen of their great baroque poet and cabbalist Mori Salim Shabazi (born 1619), a mystic-meditative style

is pre-eminent. The singing is antiphonal, alternating between two groups of singers and a precentor. The melody consists of short, slightly ornamented phrases.

Ex. 2: Yemenite Festive Song

Yemen - Shabbat Hymn "Ani esh'al". (Phon. G-K 2509)

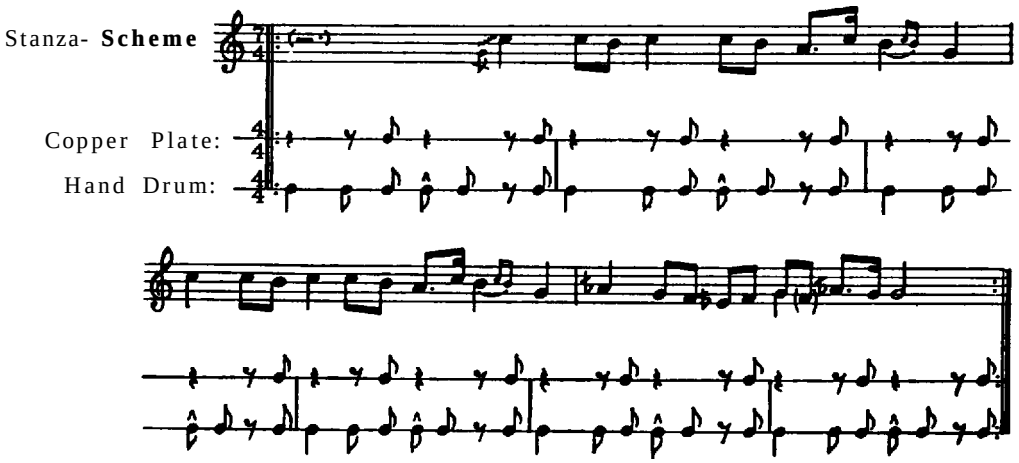


Timbre, tone quality and performance, these three are more decisive for style than any possible musical notation. Striking are the thin falsetto registers of the Yemenite singers, who remind us physically of the graceful and delicately formed South-Arabian mountain nomads, with whom they have in common the tense agility of the body which during their singing never ceases to perform dance-like movements. Thus, vocal sounds and physical movement3 together are here necessary to form a complete musical picture.

Yemenite songs for women are a world apart. On account of the strict seclusiveness of the Oriental females, something of the remote past has remained in their singing which is no longer present in the singing of the males. It is perceptible, first of all, in the odd and old-fashioned formality of the short melodic phrases with which they dress their saga-like poems. The following is such an example: a son from San'a, Yemen's capital.

Ex. 3: Yemenite Women's Song

Yemen - Women Song "Ya ualdi ya mishenehe" (Phon. G-K 1747)



Thanks to their highly developed traditional popular art, it has fallen to the Yemenites to exercise the most creative influence in Israel's musical life. Their extremely attractive song motifs are now profusely adopted and elaborated in present-day Israeli compositions. Furthermore, Yemenite dances, with their exotic steps, have now become, apart from their musical value, the model of new folk-dancing. Their costumes, silversmith craft, carpet-making and weaving have prepared the ground for a new start in handicrafts.

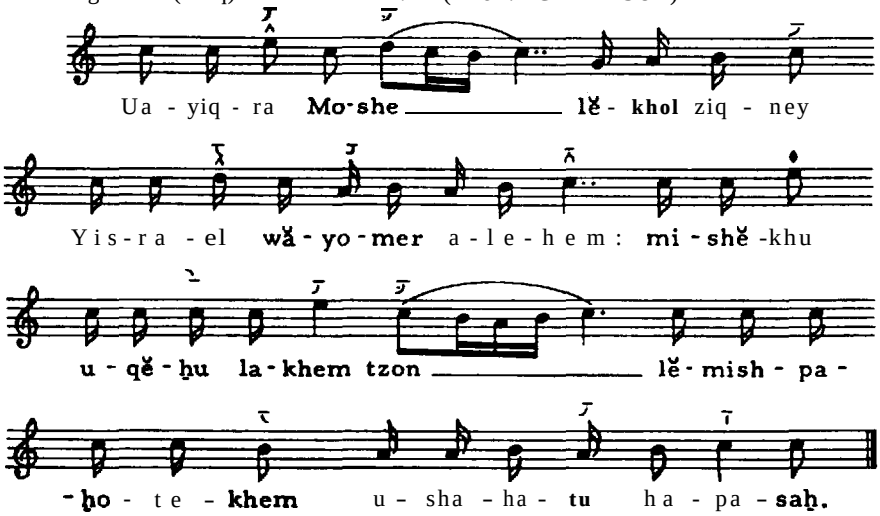
2. Iraq-The Babylonian and Kurdish Jews

In addition to the Yemenites, we regard the Babylonian Jews as an outstanding cultural group. Since the days of the Babylonian exile, i.e. since the 6th century B.C.E., an important Jewish colony existed there, known for its scholars, whose essential accomplishment was the interpretation of the Bible text in that monumental work, the Babylonian Talmud.

In music, the work of Baghdad's medieval "Masoretes" is of importance to Jew and non-Jew in terms of reading and understanding the Biblical text. These Masoretes developed a system of accents or reading marks for Bible cantillation. No wonder that the Baghdad community today still possesses one of the best developed musical liturgies. In the following example we shall give the Babylonian form of Bible cantillation. This is, like the Yemenite Ex. 1. from the book of Exodus, 12;21-22:

Ex. 4: Babylonian Bible Reading

Baghdad (Iraq) - Exodus 12:21 (Phon. G-K 1587)

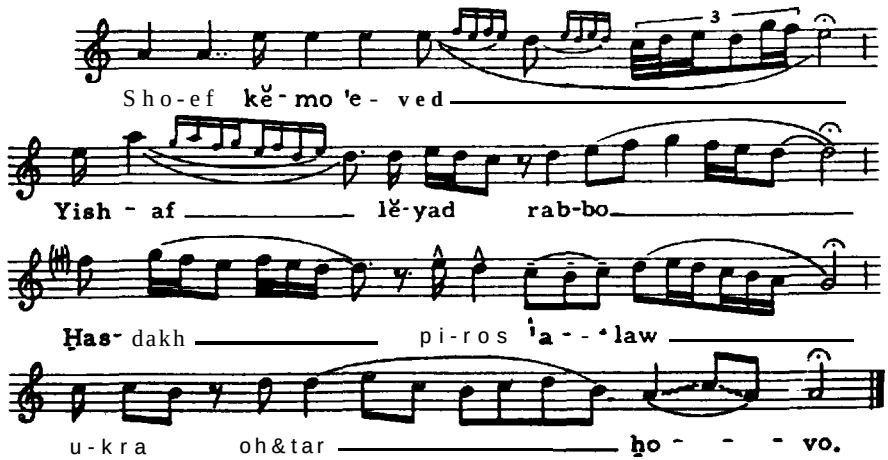


This logically phrased and very plastic way of reading is reserved for the prose text of the Bible. In prayer, on the contrary, a free cantorial melody with a broad outline is predominant.

Ex. 5: Babylonian Piyut

Baghdad (Iraq) - New Year's Prayer: "Shoef kemo 'eved"

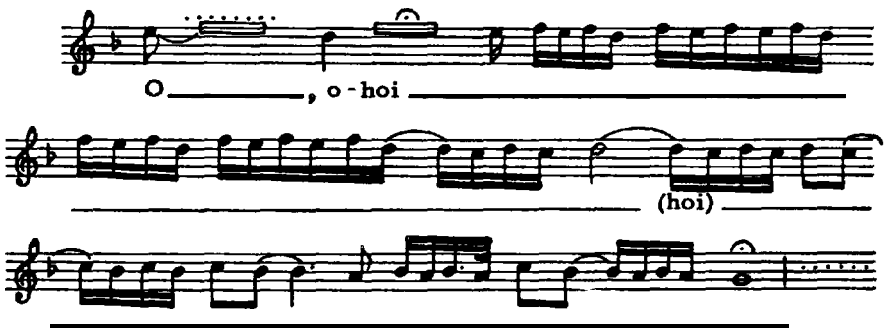
(Phon. E. G-K 2604)



A second group of the Iraqi-Babylonian tribes are represented by the Aramaic-speaking Jews of Kurdistan. In distinction to the learned Baghdad group, they are part of the more primitive community groups and are mostly mountain tribes, people of powerful physique and wild temperment, but hard-working. Their popular epic poems on biblical, historical, love and war themes which are still sung in the traditional style of their ancient bards. The melodies, corresponding each to a verse line used in this connection, bear no resemblance to recognized folksong. They are dramatic recitations richly executed, beginning with a surprisingly long wordless vocalise — as, for example, in the following Kurd song-saga told in the still very little explored. Kurmangi language.

Ex. 6: Kurd Song

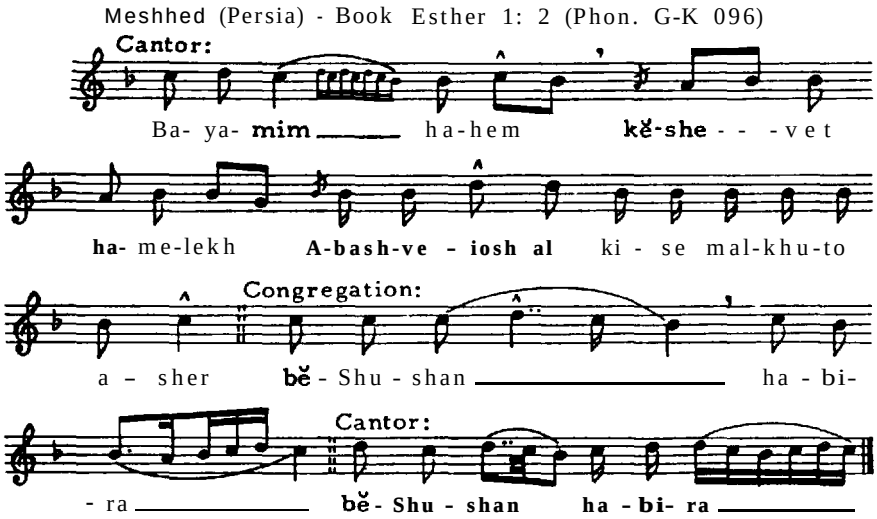
Kurdish-Jewish Epic (opening) (Phon. G-K **1018)**



3. Persia and Neighboring Countries

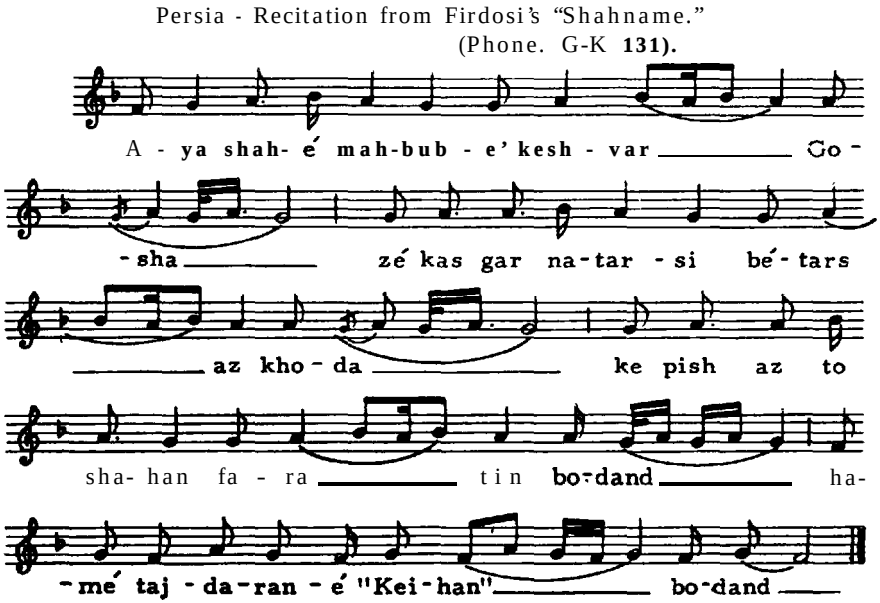
Persia, besides Iraq and Yemen, is a third cultural centre with Bukhara, Afghanistan and Daghestan. In Persia, we see an abundance of local traditions coming from Shiraz, lsphahan, Meshed, Teheran, Rast and so forth. The Persian Jews are late descendants of the tribes from the state of North Israel who were deported to Assur and Medea 135 years before the exile of prophets. They thus conserved an earlier musical liturgy, basically still the religious reform movement that took place after the downfall of South Judaea, and which marked the beginning of the classical period of the southern state of Judea to Babylonia. They, therefore, had no part in certain forms of recitation, as in the responsorial reading of the Book of Esther, which originated in Persia and is still chanted there in the ancient form.

Ex. 7: Persia: Book of Esther



The inner connection of this type of reading as done here by the Jewish "Marranos" of Meshed, with the recitation of the Persian classical "Shah-name" Saga (by the poet Firdousi) becomes evident.

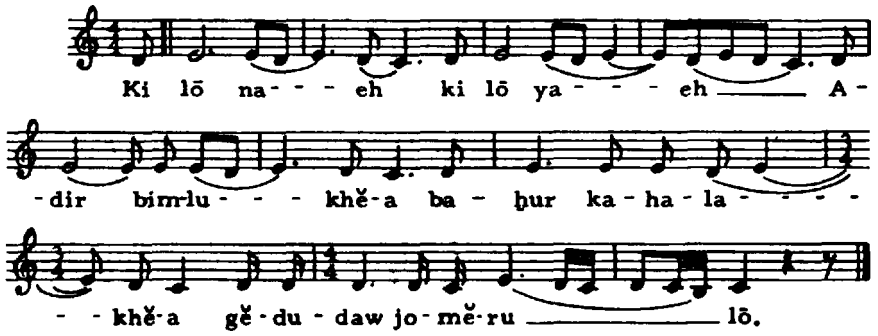
Ex. 8: Persia: Shahname Recitation



Within the Persian fold, there still exist remnants **of older, non-Semitic points of style that have become absorbed in the Jewish rites. As an example** *of* **assimilation of Persian melodies into Jewish liturgical music, here is a song from the Pesah** *haggada:*

Ex. 9: Persia: **Pesah Song** (Ki Lo No-a)

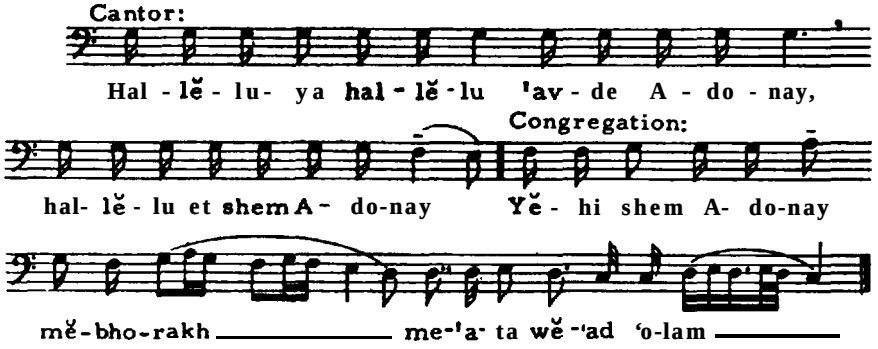
Persian ***(Meshhed)*****, Pesah Song (Phon. G-K 500)**



It may be followed by en Afghanistan form of reading the haggada which in essence is very near to the Persian one.

Ex. **10: Afghanistan:** Haggada (Holohma Anai)

Afghanistan - Psalm Recitations (Ps. 113:1-2) (Phon. G-K 2861.)



Persian culture also flourished **in Bukhara, a most important** center **of Jewish folklore Here, as in the case of Yemen, a high quality of aesthetic feeling is manifest end an abundance of folk art. Among their religious traditions, the nightly reading from the** mystical ***book*** **of Zoher gives a very true picture of the strange sounds of the high-pitched Bukharien tenor; and their power an intensity of expression, as do the many devotional songs.**

A deep gulf separates this mystic-contemplative singing from the primitive magic songs sung at Bukharian weddings by the women, the female minstrels of the Orient, who hold their own when compared with medieval entertainers. They dance, sing, make verses, extemporize, execute certain wedding ceremonials and indulge in a bit of wizardry. Often, their wedding songs are mere acclamations, and even incantations; their drumming is full of ravishing accents and polyrhythmic impulses. Wedding dances have not yet lost their functional purpose: courtship, purification, the "selling" of **the** self, the transfer of power.

II. THE MUSIC OF THE SPANISH-SEPHARDIC JEWS

Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Greece, Cochin

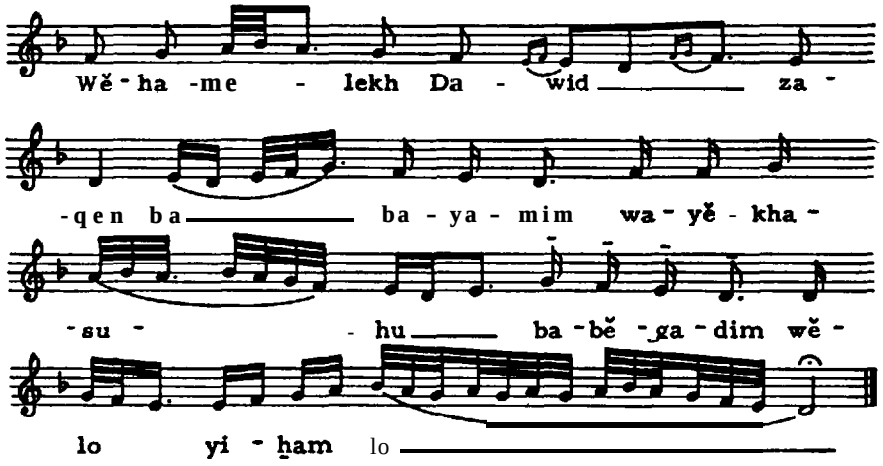
The musical heritage of Western civilization from Israel became evident through a great number of cultural contacts between the exiled Jewish people and its guest countries. On this basis, a variety of regional traditions developed which are not easily defined or related to each other. To take one instance: the historians of Jewish sacred music are today confronted with a difficult question, namely, whether under the many layers of ***diaspora*** styles, there can still be discovered a common source pointing to the all-embracing cult music of ancient Israel. Whether or not such an archetype of Jewish melody is still in existence, the only way to attack the problem seems to be to learn more about the individual attitudes to music within the many communities of the ***diaspora*** To achieve this approach we focused on the main ethnic groups and let them speak for themselves.

First came the group of Jews from purely Asiatic countries. A second great family of communities are the Spanish or ***Sephardic*** **Jews. By** this we understand those Jewish communities whose cultural center, at the height of the Arabian empire in the Middle Ages, was Spain (or, in Hebrew: Sephared). After their expulsion from Spain as a result of the Inquisition in 1492, the greater part of the refugees settled in the countries surrounding the Mediterranean-in Morocco, Egypt, Italy, Turkey, Syria, and once again, Jerusalem. These are the Oriental ***Sephardi*** Jews. A smaller part of those Spanish Jews who tried to find shelter in Portugal, finally had to emigrate northwards to Holland where they established a new Jewish centre in Amsterdam with dependencies **in London, Hamburg and South America.** Those who **remained behind were baptized by force and continued to live** there as the so-called Marranos or Conversos. In spite of their general assimilation to Catholicism. there still seem to exist some remnants of an ancient Jewish ritual, especially **among the Portuguese Jews.**

In the **countries around the Mediterranean, local variants of the *Sephardi*** tradition sprang up and spread all over the Near-Eastern countries covering many of the older Asiatic synagogal styles with a thick layer of ***Spanish-Sephardi*** **chanting, as in the following Bible reading from Morocco:**

Ex. 11: Morocco: Bible Contillation

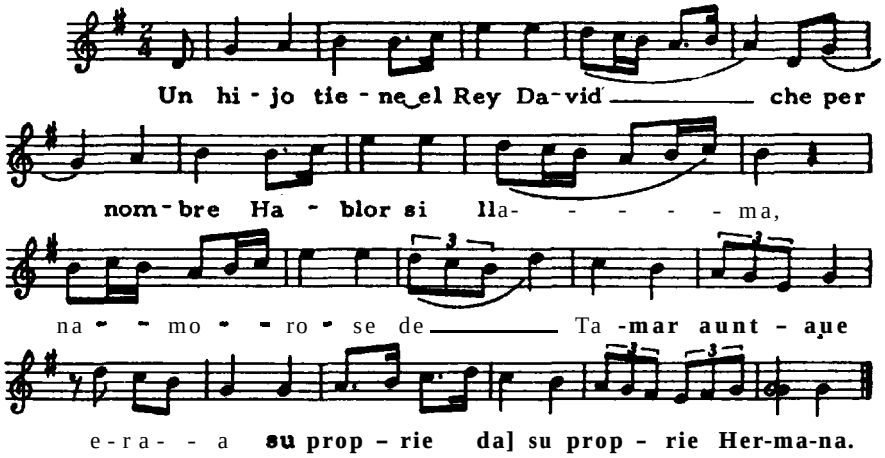
Morocco - Reg. 1, 1:l G-K 4023



Morocco, as the first stop of the great Jewish retreat, has been sheltering a great number of Jewish communities of very different origin and outlook. Among them are the descendants of the Jewish Berbers whose language, the "Shlihi," is a mixture of Berber and Hebrew elements. They have been dwelling in isolated communities, in the interior of the country, thus preserving some of the most ancient pre-Islamic trends of Jewish folk life. Another group are the descendants of Spanish Jews who settled down in the cities along the Moroccan shores: they represent an educated group and have actually preserved in their home traditions some important remnants of the pre-Columbian Iherian culture which has long since disappeared in Spain itself. Not only did they perpetuate the Castilian language of the 15th century but, together with it, also the literature of those times with Romances, Villancicos and Epics and with their inseparable musical forms of old.

Ex. 12: Morocco: Judaeo-Hispanic Romance

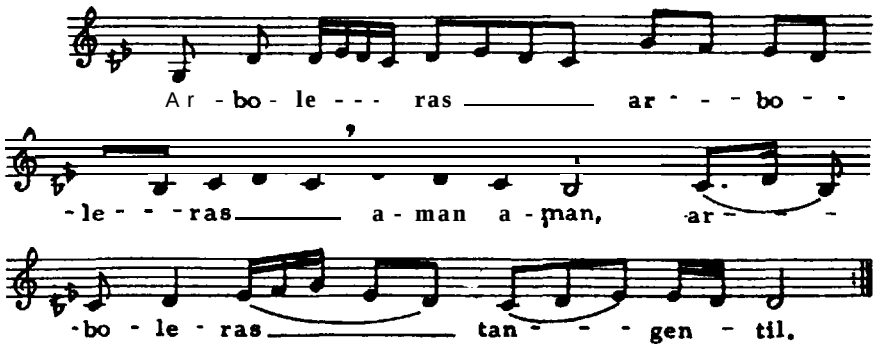
Morocco: Judaeo-Hispanic Romance. (From Ortega, no. 9)



Therefore, the ***Sephardi*** Jews, and especially those of Morocco, became the carriers of ancient elsewhere extinct elements of Spanish civilization. During the Jewish resettlement all around the Mediterranean basin, remnants of the Spanish lore were carried over the Balkanese countries and Turkey back to Jerusalem. Here, in the precincts of the Jewish quarter, Hispanic songs found a safe shelter for the following four centuries. They are practiced today as in the times of old, especially in the homes of Jews originating from the famous Jewish community of Salonica (Greece). An example of one of the historic romances, sung in the old Castilian language by a ***Sephardi*** woman of the Old City of Jerusalem, may follow:

Ex. 13: Judaeo-Hispanic Romance. (Salonica-Jerusalem)

Judaeo-Hispanic Romance: "Arboleras." (Phon. G-K 3890/l)

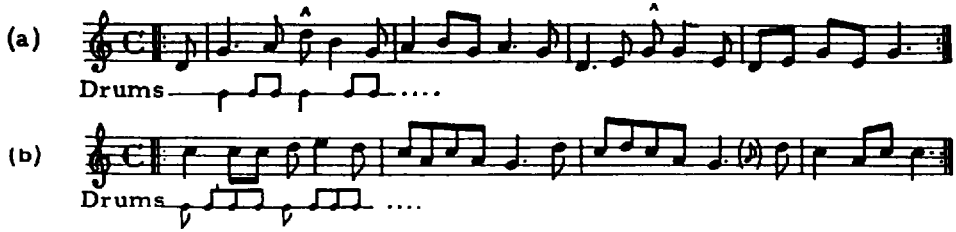


No less dramatic is the history of the Jews of ***Algeria.*** It seems that Jewish colonization started already in pre-Roman times, on the track of the Phoenician seafarers who had opened the trade route on the Mediterranean between the eastern and western shores of Tyre and Carthage. During the Second Temple, Algeria became a Roman province, and when, during the reign of Justinian, new trouble started for the Jews, many of them fled and found shelter with the Berber tribes in the interior of the country. Through the long co-existence between the Jews and the Berber fellahs of the Kabyle and the Arab nomads of the Atlas mountains, a rare type of Berber-Jews — Jewish cave-dwellers, and Arab-Jewish nomads — developed whose remnants have even been found in recent times. Lately, part of them have been resettled in the Lachish area in Israel, and others may yet follow. There are fine artisans among them, especially carpet weavers, and they still indulge in a variety of ancient folk customs and beliefs, folk songs and dances.

As in the case of the Morocccan Jews, there are several ethnic groups among the Algerian Jews. Besides the ancient stock of Berber Jews, there are communities originating from the East-Arabian countries — from Baghdad, Egypt and the Yemen- having migrated westwards after the Arab conquest. They brought with them the Babylonian practice of religious law and chant, and the split of congregations which set in here was further deepened by the influx of the Spanish Jews. Another estranged variety of Jewish descendants are the Moslem "Marranos", forcibly converted Jews during the 12th century's terror of the fanatic Almohades sects. There is reason to assume that among the Arab nomads of the Kabyle regions (and elsewhere), a good percentage is of Jewish extraction, and that, consequently, their music, too, has preserved some ancient roots of Jewish song. The Jews of the Atlas mountains may best represent the ancient symbiosis of musical styles.

EX. 14: Atlas Mountains: Two Dance Tunes

Atlas Mountains (S-Morocco) -Two Dance Tunes G-K ***4288, 4279***

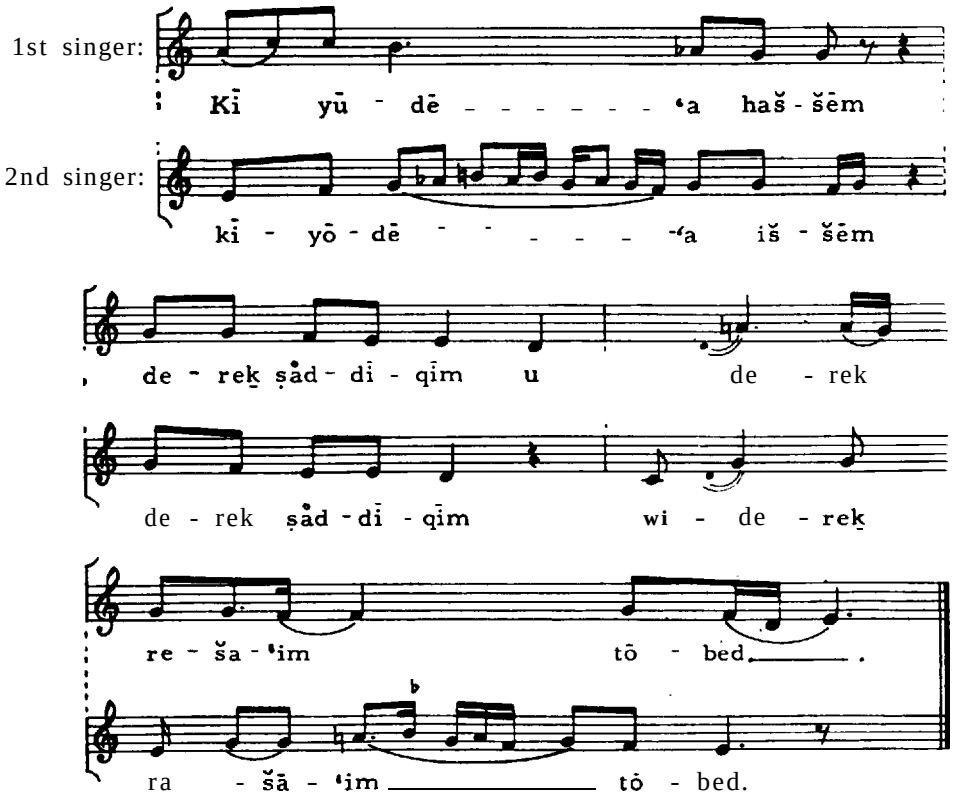


Reaching the ***Tunisian*** shores, we meet the little island of Djerba believed to have been the place of the lotus eaters of the Odyssey. There, among the Berber population, a small community of Jews used to live who claim to have settled there after the destruction of the Second Temple. Two synagogues were the spiritual centers of this ancient and unbroken tradition of communal life. Their liturgical order and religious song — though not basically different from that of the Tunisian Jews on the main-

land — show, nevertheless, some peculiarities which can only be explained through the remoteness of their islander-life which kept their singing style relatively pure from more recent influences. Their strict adherence to song alone as the exclusive musical instrument, the abhorrence shown for songs, point to an archaic approach to the idea of music making. There is, for instance, no preconceived fission on certain scales or modes while chanting a certain portion of the Bible, and the same singer may apply several such modes or intonations for the same sentence, according to the start of his voice or to his inclination of the moment, as our human voice is not bound to establish intervals as found in mechanical instruments. Thus we may uncover, **with the** Djerba Jews, some ancient roots of human music. Here are two variants *of* the **same sentence (after** R. **Lachmann)** :

Ex. 15: Tunis (Isle of Djerba — Ps. 1 : 6

Tunis (Isle of Djerba) - Ps. 1:6 (after R. Lachmann, no. 5)



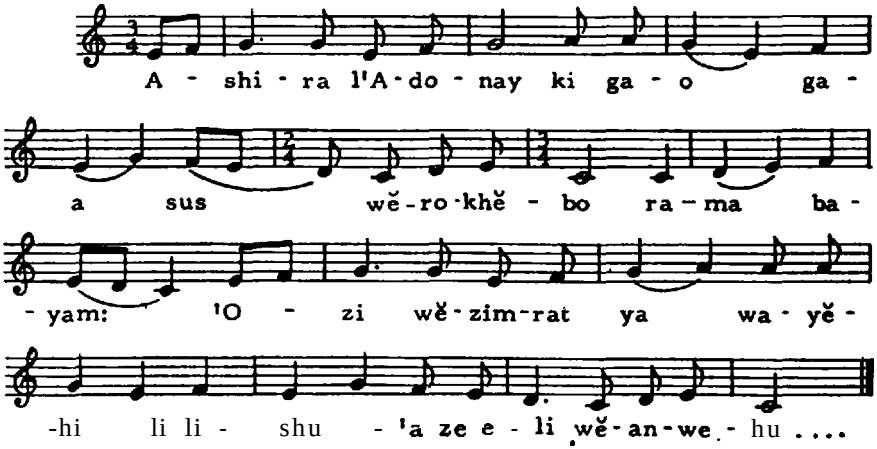
The Oriental-Sephardi Jews who had received their training in Judaic, Islamic and Roman-Christian thought, represent an intellectual force under whose impetus the musical liturgies of most of the Eastern communities were modified into a partly Spanish, partly Arab style of singing which, with the original Jewish mode, developed a new variety of richly ornamented melodies.

One of the most striking properties of this ***Sephardic*** song is the adoption of the Arab technique of guided improvisation, on certain melodic formulae of Maqamat. This went side by side with the adaptation of the measured poetry to the Hebrew language which now took on a new musical garb: During this rare interval of peace and cultural exchange between the Arab and Jewish people, the sacred music of the synagogue, hitherto jealously guarded, became gradually imbued with the beauties of Arab love songs. The Spanish school of Jewish poets, with masters like Ibn Gabirol, Ibn Ezra, or Yehuda Halevi, adopted not only the metric Arab verse but also the foreign Andalusian melodies of Islamic Southern Spain, These Judaeo-Arab songs are not unlike the Christian-Spanish Villancicos or the French Virelai of the same period and are mostly accompanied by a small ***ensemble*** of musical instruments, as in the Troubadour songs: a lute, violin, flute, cymbals and drums.

The Arab singing technique upon melodic models was then transplanted to the poetical portions of the Bible. Psalms and Canticles got their popular, song-like melodies from these, as in the following Song of Moses, performed by a Jewish cantor from Egypt:

Ex. 16: Egypt: Song of Moses (Sephardic)

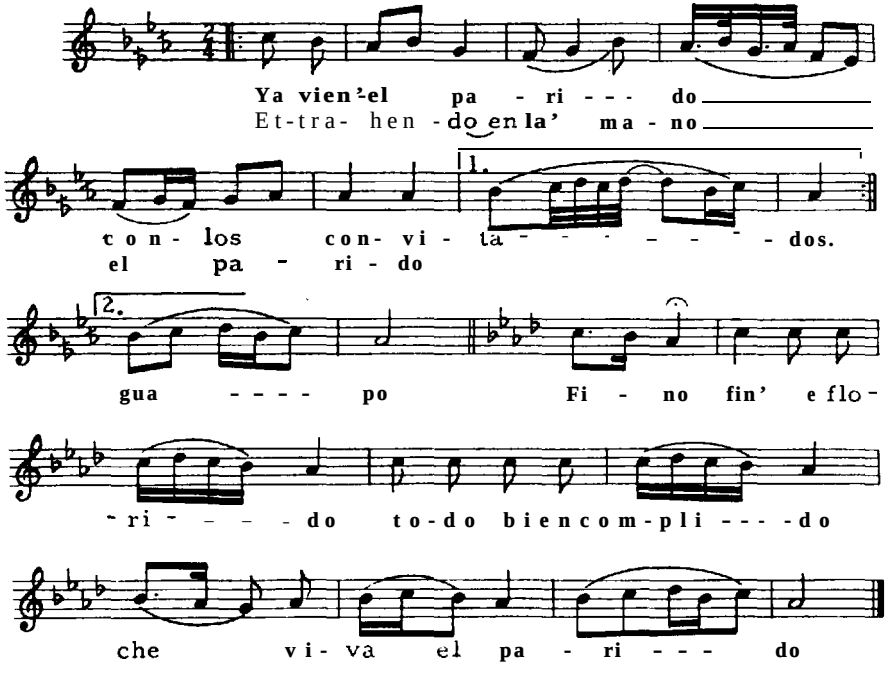
Egypt (Sephardic) - Moses' Song (Ex. 15: l-2) (Phon. G-E 2430)



From here it is only a short step to real folk-song. The genuine ***Sephardie*** folk songs are mostly in the Ladino language, the dialect spoken by the Judaeo-Spanish communities. The next example is a bi-lingual ceremonial song (in Hebrew and Ladino) **from the circumcision ritual of Greek** Jews:

Ex. 17: Solonlca: Circumsision Song

Sephardic - Greek Circumcision Song. (Phon. G-K 0156.)

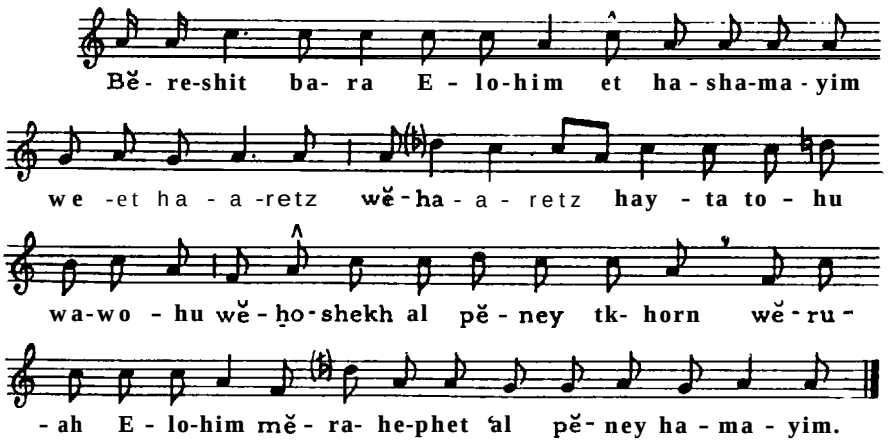


With this Greek-Jewish song we have reached the eastern shores of the Mediterranean. Here, an independent school of Hebrew poets developed in the 10th century, culminating in the 16th century in the Kabbalistic school of Safed, in Galilee, with its master poet Israel Nagara. In his Diwan (or collection of songs) of 1587 and 1599/60 he provided a list of well-known melodic tunes which may have served many hundreds *of* individual songs, and which seem to have survived in a number of present-day hymns.

Strange traces of the Spanish style have been discovered among the far-away Jewish tribes of South-Indian Jews coming from Cochin on the coast of Malabar: emissaries and teachers of Spanish upbringing may have transferred the Spanish idiom of chanting to these parts.

Ex. 18: Cochin Jews, (South India) : Cantillation

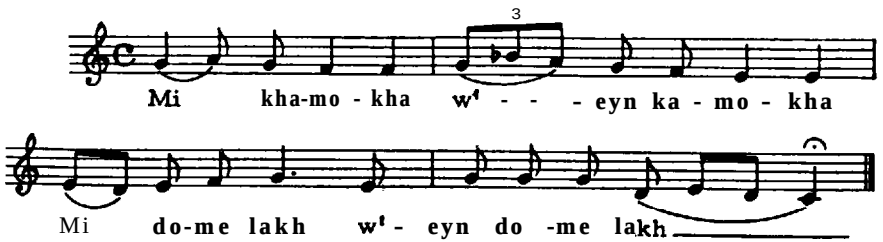
Cochin (India) - Bible Recitation. Gen. 1: 1. (Phon. G-K)



We have **now reached the extreme Eastern end of Oriental-&p&r&c traditions. On the other hand, at the Western end of Europe, the Portu-*guese-Sephardic community*** of **Amsterdam had flourished for more than** four centuries. In their sacred music, the ancient Iberian style is still recognizable, though mixed with the elements of the Gregorian Chant and rendered in a more rational intonation. But, in spite of the very Westernized form of this prayer, we can still trace the underlying ***Oriental-Sephardic*** **origin.**

Ex. 19: Holland: Purim Hymn (Seph.-Portuguese)

Holland (Seph. - Portuguese) : Purim Hymn. (Phon. G-K **1294.**)



SPECIAL JEWISH TRIBES AND SECTS

Apart from the above-named Oriental communities, there are some rather forgotten Jewish groups of the East, as, for instance, the Bene-Israel and the *Cochin Jews* from India, or the black Falasha-Jews from Ethiopia. There are also some ancient Jewish sects, such as the Samaritans, the Karaites, and the (more recent) Sabbatean sect. Among *Indian Jews, we* know two different communities: (a) the *Bene-Israel* congregation in and around Bombay which probably stems from the Galilee which they left during the invasion of Antioch Epiphanee (175 B.C.), settling down on the West coast near Konkan, in complete isolation from the rest of Judaism. Thus, they did not know, until recently, of the post-ezilian religious feasts, not even of *Hanukka -an* event which occurred only ten years later than their flight. On the other hand, they still retained some Temple customs like the incense sacrifice. apparently without knowing of the Fall of the Second Temple and the abolition of burned sacrifice. In the course of time, their song and chant had adopted some particulars of Hindu song, and, in more recent times, their liturgical music partly assimilated to the general Oriental-sephardic one, as already shown. About ten years ago, a large number of them was resettled in Israel.

In a similar way, the almost forgotten Jewish tribe from *Cochin,* in South-India, was transferred to Israel (in 1954). *They, too,* had emigrated from ancient Israel after the destruction of the Temple, and settled on the South-West coast of Malabar. They eventually reached political independence through a decree of 1020, and even developed a caste system, in accordance with their Hindu neighbours. Their style of singing is reminiscent of the Malayalam culture. but again assimilated to the *Sephardic rite.*

One of the most interesting sideways of Jewish history are the black Jews, or *Falashas,* of Ethiopia. They belong to the Amharic tribes, have their own villages, their classes of priests, their altars where they still practice the burned sacrifice, and even a class of monks. Their holy books are the Old Testament and an apocryphal "Book of Hymns" written in the old Geez-language. The Talmud remained unknown to them as did the poat-ewilian feasts, Until modem times, Hebrew was not known to them. Their religious song is accompanied by drums and an iron gong — a quite unusual thing in Judaism. As to the modalities and the voice-timbre of their songs, one can observe a close association to the East-African folklore.

Jewish Sects: Of the ancient Jewish sects, it is the schismatic movement of the *Samaritans* which is the moat interesting from the musical and folkloristic point of view, Their forms of chanting the Bible, the phonetization of the Hebrew, their melodic lines drawn out and interrupted by magic calls — these and many more particulars indicate that we are facing here a living antiquity Not unlike the Cochin Jews and the Falashas. they still adhere to the incense burning of the Temple period, t.he famous Pesah lamb sacrifice. They also have ten reading accents for the cantillation of the Bible, but their melodization and grouping of accents is different from any known Jewish one. Many magic beliefs and customs help to complete the picture of an archaic tradition. A number of Samaritan families live in Israel (Holon) .

The sect of *Karaites* sprang up in Iraq during the 8th century as one of the schismatic branches of the Babylonian Talmud Academies rejecting Talmudic law and rabbinical authority. In the footsteps of the Jewish wanderings in medieval times, they spread southwards to the Egyptian ***diaspora,*** and northwards through Constantinople to Poland and Luithuania. The musical liturgy of their Cairo colony reveals great likeliness with the musical dialect of Egypt's Jews.

A quite new form of Jewish sect are the Sabbatheans (Subbotniis), a group of Russian Proselytes which came into being about the year 1800 and spread like fire over whole districts. After murder and persecution, they were banned to Siberia and the Caucasus by a decree of 1825, ordered by the Tzar Alexander I. Some families of these fugitive Russian peasants found their way to Israel and settled in the Emek, in a village of their own (Kfar HaHoresh), but recently they left to join their brethren elsewhere. The musical rendering of their psalms and hymns with which they honour the Sabbath, the center of their sectarian movement, has preserved the ancient responsorial form of South-Russian folk choirs.

III. THE MUSIC OF THE ASHKENAZI JEWS

Western and Eastern Europe

A third ethnic group among the Jews are the European or ***Ashkenazi*** Jews who among themselves are again divided into those of Western and Eastern Europe.

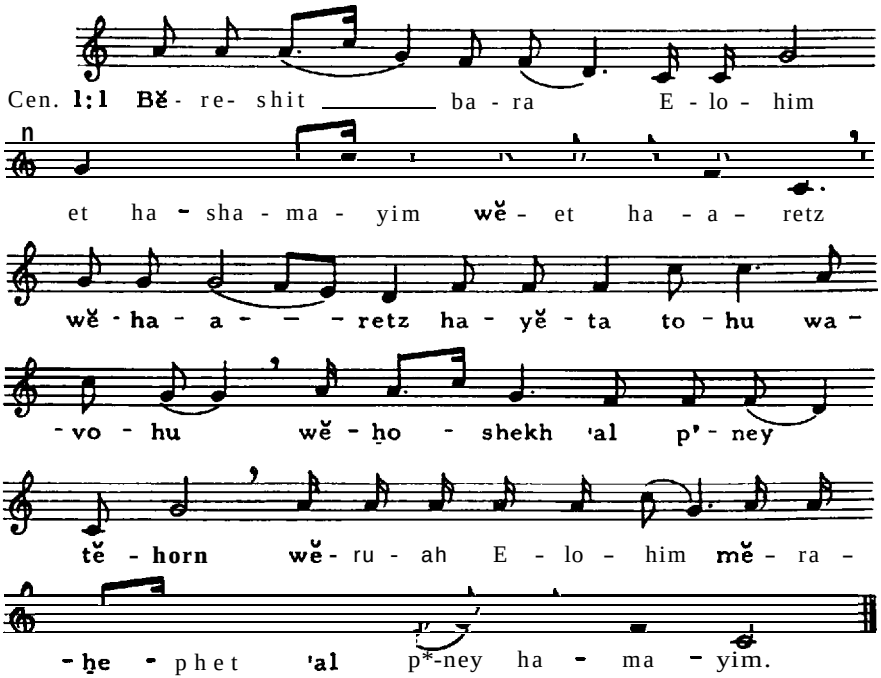
The ***Ashkenazi*** communities settled mainly in the non-Latin countries of Europe. Their most ancient settlements stem from late antiquity, particularly from the time of the Roman Empire when it was about to expand its colonization scheme and erect strategic points all along the river Rhenus with the foundation of cities like Mainz, Worms, Bonn and Aachen. In these surroundings of South-West Germany, the oldest centres of Ashkenazi community life can be found.

In times when these Jews ***enjoyed*** relative peace — as they occasionally did in the early Middle Ages — they may have absorbed a great deal of the musical language of the Gentiles. In particular, the contact with the medieval German folk song must have been rather strong, given the fact that, until this very day, its traces can easily be detected in Western Synagogue chants and prayers.

Surprisingly enough, the Bible cantillation of West-Germnn communities **is** still built upon the archaic pattern of pentatonic musical folk idioms which at that time was customary with the Celtic tribes who inhabited the Rhenus region. The following example illustrates the five-tone style of ***Ashkenazi*** Bible reading with its broad declamation and trumpet-like melodic turns.

Ex. 20: Ashkenazic Bible-Reading

Ashkenazic Bible Cantillation in Israel. (Phon. G-K 0167.)



The Jews in Western and Eastern Europe did not remain separate entities but were constantly intermingled by fate and history. During the 15th and 16th centuries, pogroms and persecution drove the Jews of Central Europe, especially those of Southwestern Germany, out of their traditional homes in an Eastern direction, to Poland, Lithuania, Russia and Ukraine. With them went their folklore, Westernized through long established cultural contacts, and their Judaeo-German language, Yiddish. In their new surroundings, in Eastern Europe, and without further contact or development ,these properties were preserved in their fundamentals in the now developing idiom of a Yiddish home culture and language. When, after the gruesome Chmelnitzki pogroms in the 17th century, Jews fled back to Germany, the reverse process started, and the many cantors from Eastern Europe started to cover the older German-Jewish folklore with a new blend of synagogue chanting.

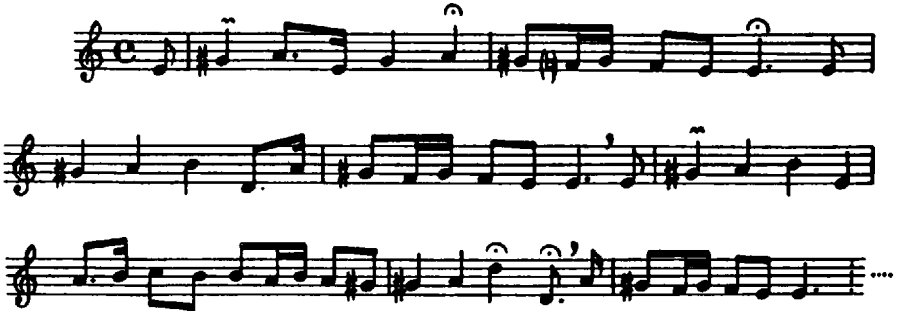
Meanwhile, in the East, Jewish life in the ghetto had started with its degradation, poverty and affliction. Yet, in spite of all the misery within the ghetto walls, folksongs sprang **up once more with a vehemence and emotional intensity which gave the Yiddish song a kind of universal appeal.**

In **the 18th century, the mystic religious movement of *hasidism,* heir to**

the older ***kabbalistic*** movement, swept like a hurricane over the misery-stricken communities. Thanks to Martin Buber who helped us to rediscover hasidic thought in all its depth, the way is now open to a better understanding of its music. ***Hasidism started*** as a popular movement, the rebellion of the man in the street against the learned rabbinical Judaism with its fixed and often harsh postulates. Instead of this, the followers of hasidism asked for individual piety and the inner vision of God, for contemplation, exaltation, and the immense joy to view the greatness of God. Words and knowledge, and ready-made prayers and ritual laws were regarded as a hindrance in man's approach to God. His only knowledge was his feeling heart; his only true speech--his speechless melodies, the ***niggun,*** and singing itself became the highest communication with the Almighty. Such a wordless niggun has six phases of inner contemplation and finishes in ecstatic dances. Here is the beginning of a ***niggun:***

Ex. 21: Hasidic Niggun

Hasidic Nigun (Dem Rebbens Nigun) (after Idelsohn, Vol. 10, 40. 123.)



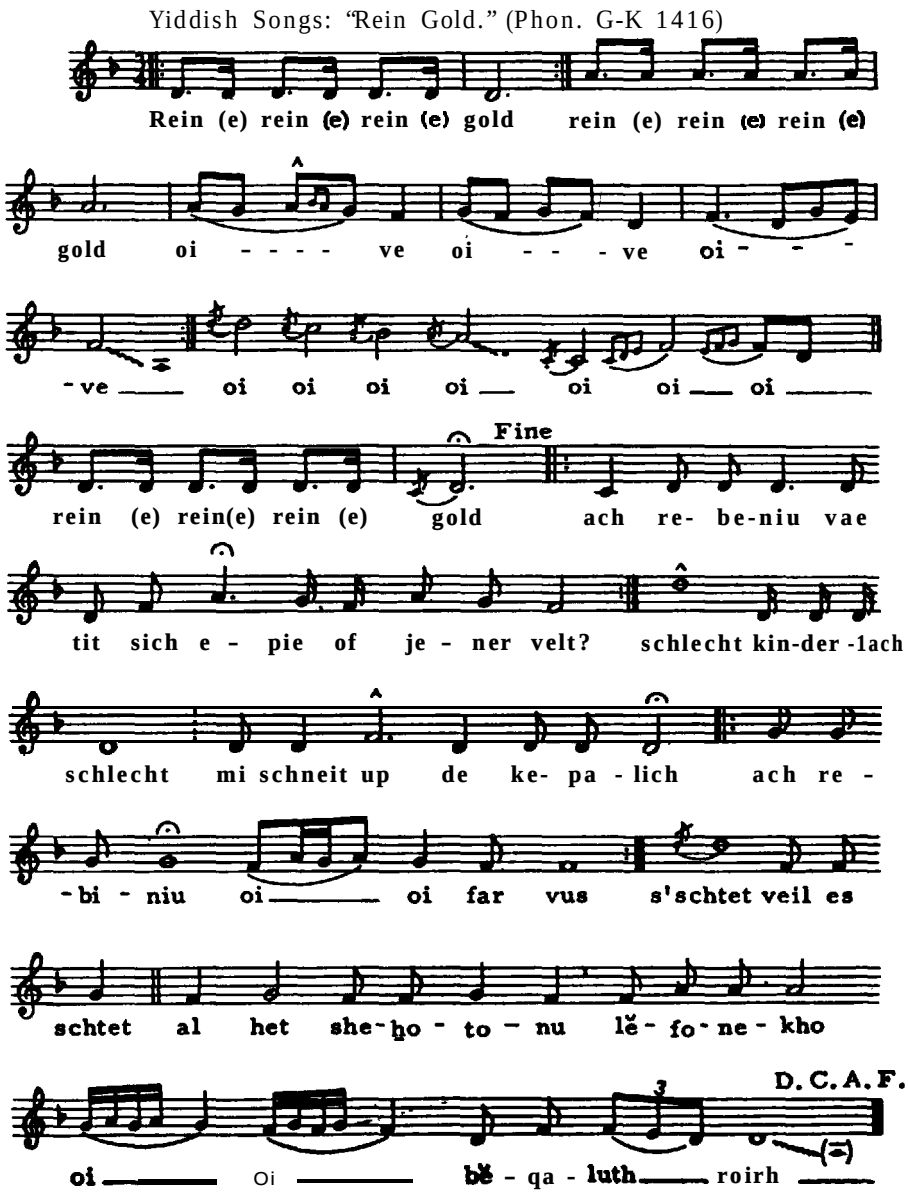
Here, one is aware of a new creative force which is constantly seeking self-expression, regardless of the mixed origin of its melodic means. Yet, these heterogeneous elements are bound together by an ecstatic intonation and a kind of Oriental ornamentation which give it a character quite its own.

Particularly striking is the richly ornamental melody of this prayer which, with its dramatic climaxes and sudden parlandos, is not far away from the dramatic recitatives of early Baroque opera, but it may also have absorbed a good deal of the Arabesque style of Oriental singing.

During the last centuries, the secular folksong of East-European Jewry has developed so profusely, with thousands of touching little songs, that it may rightly demand a coveted place in the domain of Jewish folklore. Since the eighteenth century, it has been saturated with ***hasidic nigun-melodies*** and with anything else coming under the heading of ancient Oriental formulae for chanting, or prayer tunes, or remnants of gentile folksongs as were the Polish, Ukrainian, Rumanian, Hungarian or German tunes, and of strains of instrumental art music, even of marches or ditties of any description.

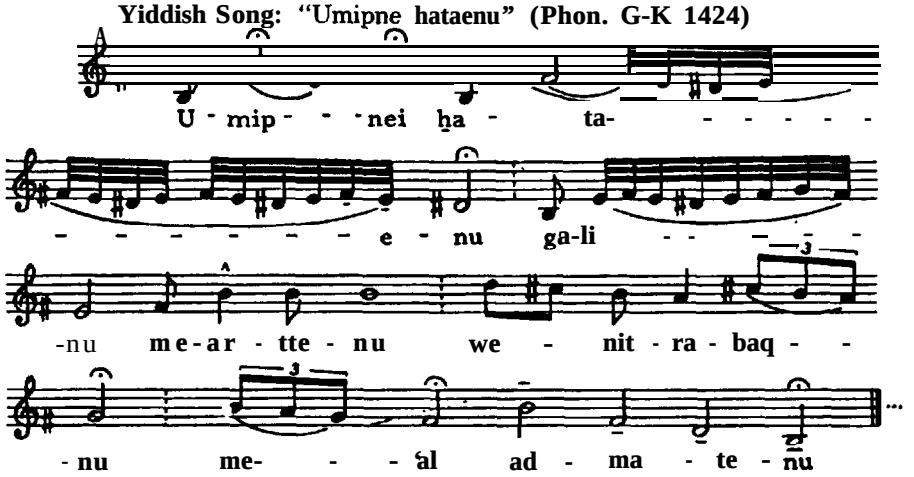
The East-Ashkenazi Yiddish folksong excels, in particular, in the type of semi-religious popular songs of which the following "school" song, a dialogue between a disciple and his learned rabbi, may serve as prototype of this genre. (The pupil asks how the other world looks and the master answers with a satirical play of words.)

Ex. 22: Yiddush Folksong "Rein Gold"



A special feature of these folksongs is their bilingual or even trilingual composition. Usually, their central text is a literal Hebrew quotation from a Bible verse, often a Psalm, or else from prayer lyrics which were translated and commented on in the vernacular, as in the bilingual songs of the Mastersingers. Like the previous example, also the following tune-a nostalgic song of Zion-is sung in Hebrew and Yiddish.

Ex. 23: Yiddush Song: "Umipne Hataenu"



This Hebrew quotation serves as a kind of prelude or introduction dressed in the traditional style of an ecstatic cantoral recitative, and is followed, without a break, by a popular exegetic translation in the vernacular, moving in its candor and naivety.

Concluding we may say that the musical legacy of ancient Israel for Western civilization worked on a double track. Just as Israel provided the Western Christian world with the wealth of religious and musical values, so, in her turn, exiled Israel received correspondent values from the peoples and cultures of the countries in which the Jews were now scattered. Together with all that remained of the Jewish people, music went with them into their exiles. Therefore, Jewish music underwent great changes of styles and expression. Today, it seems to exist only in a multitude of synthetic alloys which are as difficult to separate as are chemical elements. Nevertheless, it happened that Jewish music as such did not completely disappear and it even gained new stature by passing through various stages of renaissance under the impact of both the Islamic and Christian civilizations. Its history during the ages of exile could easily be presented as a sequence of temporal and local symbioses-each one changing its surface without destroying its basis.

Thus the stage was set for new developments, among them also an artistic trend. But a more profound renaissance of Jewish music based on the direct sources and resources of ancient traditions may possibly spring up in modem Israel where the language of the Bible has again become a spoken tongue and Bible cantillation and song the active forces to inspire musical production.

IN MEMORIAM: A. W. BINDER

SAUL MEISELS

In the passing of Abraham Wolf Binder, Jewish music in America has lost one of its great pioneers. He was a prolific composer, teacher, conductor, lecturer; a great influence on young Jewish students. The purpose of his life was creative service to the field of Jewish music.

I am one whose life was touched by A. W. Binder. As a singer thirty-five years ago under his direction in the "Y" Choral Society, and throughout my thirty years in the cantorate, I was and continue to be impressed by his unerring devotion to the cause of Jewish music, his sensitive musicianship, and his earnest efforts to broaden the interests of those around him in music of an authentically Jewish and religious spirit.

Consider his influence on Jewish music for the synagogue. Anyone who professes any interest at all in the synagogue must, I am sure, possess already a number of his volumes. He was among the first of the Jewish composers of America to bring Palestinian music to the attention of the American Jew. Dr. Binder possessed a deep love for Zion, and this found expression in his many songs and cantatas.

I recall meeting him in Israel, where he was completing a new work for chorus and soloists, inspired — he told me — by the atmosphere of Israel. "Hora V'Hodaya" Praise and Dance: A Choral Ballet, has since been published, as well as a Friday evening service inspired by the themes and tonal colors of Israel.

He was the first of the American Jewish composers to dedicate his life to Jewish music. He became the inspiration for others who subsequently emulated him. Small wonder, therefore, that he was the music director for so many years of Dr. Wise's Free Synagogue, and Professor of Music at the Jewish Institute of Religion. Those who came in contact with him were not only enriched but could not help but become intensely devoted to the Jewish musical idiom.

His primary interest at all times was: How can Jewish music best be served? This was the goal towards which he devoted himself. The music which he created reaffirmed strongly his belief in the distinctive character of Jewish music. It has become a touchstone for others to emulate, a prophetic road upon which others follow.

A. W. Binder taught a generation to become aware of the musical heritage of its people. Into this effort he poured his gifts, and through these he made us prouder and stronger in our appreciation. His is a voice which will be heard for a long, long time.

FROM THE INTRODUCTION TO "KOL YISRAEL"*

Translated by: MORRIS LEVINSON

East and West in Hazzanut (Ashkenazic)

"Hazzanut," is the musical art and science that the *Sh'liah Tzibur* employs during the service in the synagogue. It Is a great and precious religious and national-historical art that occupies a singular place in the Jewish musical world. Hazzanut has always striven to give voice not only to the deep religious feeling of each pious Jew as he stood in prayer before his Maker, but also tried to articulate, in its song, the greatness and innate goodness of the Master of the Universe; the feelings of longing, yearning and innermost hopes of the individual Jew and the Hebrew nation while, at the same time, to instill a festive and joyous spirit into the life of the Jews.

Hazzanut is an ancient institution that, during the course of generations assumed certain forms while divesting itself of others. The hazzan, as *Sh'liah Tzibur,* is not found in Talmudic literature. Later sources, however, do depict him in that role. The transformation of the hazzan from his early beginnings as a servant in the sanctuary, in various capacities, to a permanent *Sh'liah Tzibur,* began to take place during the Gaonic period. Hazzanim were first permitted to officiate as *Sh'lihe Tzibur* in the 5th and 6th centuries after the destruction of the Temple and became rooted firmly in that position during succeeding generations.

Hazzanut was originally conceived in order to give musical interpretation to the Psalms, the poetry and the prayers and paralleled, in growth, the development of our various Books of Prayer. The hazzan, appointed as he was to be the musical interpreter, was rightfully called the *Sh'liah Tzibur* for he was not only the sweet singer of the Jewish Community, but its representative, pleading its case, voicing its heart's desires, its strivings and hopes, bringing its sufferings and aches before the tribunal of the Almighty.

Vocal art and religious song occupied a very important position during the days of the first and second Temple. Just as the syna-

*** "Kol Yisrael" is a two volume anthology of hazzanic material for the liturgical year published by the "Bilu" Synagogue and Cantorial Seminary in Tel Aviv, Israel in 1964. The Introduction is, in fact, a comprehensive review of the history and development of hazzanut.**

The editor of the anthology is the well known expert on hazzanut and cantillation, M. S. Geshury. Much of the music is the work of the late revered hazzan and teacher of hazzanim, Solomon Rawitz.

gogue, the "little sanctuary," took the place to some degree, of the Holy Sanctuary, so did hazzanut find its source in the songs of the Levites. Hazzanic music and the music of the Levites, however, were, never exactly identical. The songs of the Levites were, naturally, inspiration and eastern-oriental spirit in the land of its birth, hazza-estine in answer to the call of the hour, at the destruction of the Second Temple, was meant to serve the Jews of the diaspora as well as those remaining in the Land of Israel. Although it' received its inspiration and eastern-oriental spirit in the land of its birth, hazza-nut went through many changes and metamorphoses due to the changes wrought in the Siddur and the extensive global wanderings of our people.

Hazzanut, born simultaneously with the synagogue, developed in minute degrees, finally to achieve recognition as a great art in our music and literature. The synagogue became the center of musical creativity in the Land of Israel and in the Diaspora, with many of the ancient modes of the Holy Temple woven, in various patterns, into the fabric of synagogue song. Definite and permanent nus-ha-ot became established for all the prayers and were preserved, in their traditional motives, to the present day. The hazzanic *"Avodah" came to* include the following: a) The nusah of the prayers b) A systematic style c) The musical scales of the synagogue d) A free .and stirring musical formula and e) Recitative.

When the Temple was destroyed, a gradual development of hazzanut began in the various lands where Jews resided, keeping as its original source. the spirit of Eretz Yisrael. Not until the Ren-aissance period in Europe did hazzanut begin to show signs of recognizable change.

Hazzanut, in its beginning, was indeed the unifying force for all Jews. There was absolutely no difference in the religious music of one Jewish community or another so long as the ties between the Jews remaining in the Land of Israel and the Exiles were maintained. As time went on, however, divisions came about. The three basic divisions in hazzanut are: Ashkenazic, Sefardic and Yemenite. The nusah of each of the three has retained much of what each has in-herited from the ancient Hebrew musical modes in the Land of Israel. The latter two, for various reasons, show very little development during the period of their existence although the heavy hand of as-similation -is evident in their music to a greater or lesser degree. Sefardic and Yemenite hazzanut is not considered vibrant enough today to establish a basis for its continued independent existence in the State of Israel of today. We shall deal, here, only with Ashzenazic hazzanut which has enjoyed the highest degree of development both

in a gigantic hazzanic library and in hazzanic personalities, hundreds of whom are to be numbered among musical geniuses who left a legacy of great honor to hazzanut, Jewish music, tradition, and Judaism.

Ashkenazic hazzanut has given birth to much research and countless discoveries and, since the 15th century, experienced many innovations and changes. Many scholars and musicologists labored in the field of the Ashkenazic nusah, arranging its forms into scientific musical theories. The Sefardic ***nusah,*** on the other hand, still awaits the hand of competent authoritative research.

The basic attributes of the original hazzan were twofold: a) the possessor of a naturally beautiful voice from early childhood and b) the creator of melody or an improvisor who produced melodic lines in the course of prayer without having known what he would sing beforehand, while simultaneously remaining faithful to the musical tradition ("MiSinai" tunes and trope) that had been handed orally from one generation to the next. In spite of the freedom assumed while improvising, the creative hazzan remained faithful to the spirit of the nusah. The background of Jewish melody was both nationalistic and religious. The hazzan was obliged to sing his own melodies, products of his own rich musical imagination, without being able to notate them because modem musical script had not yet been invented. Where the birth of a particular style of hazzanut occurred in the East it was thoroughly Eastern. The recitative and coloratura had their origins in the East. The measured beat and scale, however, were not known in Eastern music.

Eastern hazzanut is identified by improvisation and cantillation. These aspects remained indigenous to the East for hundreds of years prior to its contact with the West and with Europe, the continent which eventually became the focal point for religious and secular music. That contact came about accidentally when Eastern Jewish music came up against the music of other religions whose very theories and form3 were completely strange to the East. It seemed, at first glance, that Ashkenazic hazzanut spread its wings in all directions when it emerged from its Eastern walls because it took on the characteristics of "amended" Western music and became, in reality, a blend of East and West. In spite of the strong Western influence, hazzanut was unable to adopt European harmony in its entirety. The European harmonic garments did not quite fit the melodies that had first seen the light of day in the Eastern land of Israel.

Ashkenazic hazzanut is prevalent among the majority of the Jews throughout the world. During a period of about 1500 years it

existed as an oral tradition and began to find written form during the era of Solomon Rossi. The Hazzan in the Ashkenazic community became its central figure. There were many who excelled in their vocal prowess and musical ability. Many others found their forte in composition, and created a wealth of melodic treasures that were preserved by our people with the composers, themselves, remaining anonymous. During the recent centuries many new works were added by hazzanim of Europe who, having acquired artistic and musical proficiency, wrote choral works that served as accompaniments to the hazzan or as compositions sung independently by the choirs. Great artists, hazzanim and conductors, enriched the Jewish prayer service with their hazzanic creations. The synagogues of Berlin, Vienna, Budapest, Warsaw, Wilno, Lemberg, Odessa, Moscow, Petrograd and others attracted the elite of their countries' society who came to listen, spellbound, to the prayers as they were sung by the hazzanim and their choirs.

The hazzanim of Eastern Europe emphasized the lyricism inherent in the Psalms while the hazzanim of "Ashkenaz" (Germany-Western Europe-M.L.) chose to sing those piyuttim that abounded in religious exaltation such as "L'cho Dodi," "Mi Chomocho" and others. The thrilling excitement engendered by hazzanut served as a great educational force in the lives of Russian and Polish Jewry. The influence of that hazzanut was unbelievably great and the spell of its magic still influences large segments of our people even today. The hazzan became obliged to study continually and to become adept in nusah, the Hebrew language and its sources no less than in general musical theory and its various tributaries.

Ashkenazic hazzanut of Europe was preserved in its original purely-Eastern form until the Renaissance period in Italy. The ears of the Jews living in Italy were suddenly aroused to the sounds of new musical styles of independent character that found early entrance to within the walls of the svnagogue. The idiosyncracy of fate had caused Christian music, which had originally been influenced by that of ours, as evidenced in Gregorian chant and church music of various periods, to make a complete about face and begin to bear strong influence upon Jewish music.

Salamon Rossi (1587-1628), the great musician and composer who lived in Mantua, Italy, was the first to attempt the creation of music for the synagogue in a polyphonic style, in accordance with the Catholic stvle of Palestrina. His work was printed in 1622 and bore the title ***"Ha-shirim Asher Li-Shlomo."*** Yehuda de Medina who served as hazzan in a synagogue in Venice, Italy, the possessor of a beautiful tenor voice, sought to create a place for Rossi's composi-

tions, with great difficulty. Rossi was the first to introduce strange music into the songs of the synagogue. His creations were not universally accepted because they lacked the beauty and inner excitement of traditional Jewish music. Foreign influences, mostly of Palestrina, were evident in Rossi's music and the Italian Jewish communities found it very difficult to permit its entrance into the synagogue.

It is interesting to note that the influence of Palestrina's music reached the circle of rabbis in Italy as well. Many of them were drawn to it. Rabbi Yehuda Mascato of Mantua, a devotee of Palestrina's music, sought to prove that the word "musica" was derived from the Hebrew "mozeg," meaning, "to measure" (in this case, to measure tones) and that "Calliope" (the Italian Muse of Song) was derived from the Hebrew ***Kol Yaffe*** (beautiful voice). Rabbi Abraham Porte-Leone, devoted one-third of his tome ***Sh'litei Giborim*** (1682) to the value of music.

While Solomon Rossi was introducing the pretty baubles of Japhet into the tents of Shem, there was a Christian musician of that era, by the name of Benedetto Marcello, who visited regularly in the Jewish houses of worship, found great interest in their traditional tunes and adopted many of them to the various Psalms and Festival prayers.

That transpired in Italy. Hazzanut in the other lands of the Diaspora remained just as it had always been, with its virtues and its lacks. In Germany, in the 14th century, Rabbi Yaakov Molin Segal (Maharil) stood as an obstructing dam against the flow of new compositions by hazzanic composers. Thanks to him we have become the heirs to many traditional tunes for the Festivals and Sabbath

Eventually there occurred a division within Ashkenazic ***hazzanut Ha-regesh*** (emotional song) there emerged the hazzanut of Western Europe called ***Zimrat Ha-Seder*** (systematic song), the foremost proponents of which were Solomon Sulzer, the Viennese hazzan and Louis Lewandowski, the choir-director of the Berlin Synagogue. The relationship between the "emotional" and the-"systematic" was not an easy one among the Ashkenazic Jews. The Jewish recitative which had originally been based upon traditional modes, gave way to a metered melodic line in accordance with the then-current European secular taste and became based upon the major and minor modes that had just been introduced to the music of that time.

The theory of "systematic song" ran parallel with the "Reform of Judaism" movement popular among the worldly Jews of that time, headed by the scholarly Moses Mendelsohn. The cry ***"N'hei k'hol***

ha-Goyim" (let us become like all other peoples) that echoed throughout the Western Jewish Communities, soon encompassed the subject of Jewish prayer, its identity, context, its musical content and form. A great polemic was aroused concerning these problems and a fierce battle ensued, lasting many years, between the "Reformers" and the "Conservationists."

Western and Central Europe saw the inclusion of foreign strains in Jewish music and the cultural exchange of the Christian and Jewish communities as had occurred in Italy. The acculturated Jews found flaws in their own music. Emil Breslauer, the Berlin assimilationist, issued a special publication in which he tried to prove that there is nothing original in Jewish music but that the ancient Hebrews borrowed it, wholly, including scales, modes, and styles from other nations, younger than the Hebrews. The Christians and their foremost musical exponents, on the other hand, had great respect and admiration for synagogue music. Franz Liszt, one of the greatest of Europe's musicians, emphasized in one of his essays, his deep impression with the prayers chanted by Hazzan Sulzer in Vienna. The singer Nicolai Linau, the composer Franz Schubert, and many others were just as favorably influenced.

Solomon Sulzer (1804-1890) trained his Viennese choir to sing in four-part harmony, with definite nuances and church-like discipline. His main goal was to give an aesthetic aura to the service so that it would be not only "pleasant to hear but beautiful to see." A new functionary was thus created — the "Assistant to the Hazzan" or choir director.

Lewis Lewandowski (1823-1949) shared with Sulzer of Vienna and Samuel Naumbourg of Paris in pioneering the new music of the synagogue. He succeeded in establishing, in the Berlin synagogue, the first choir that sang in accordance with the established principles of harmony, thus luring the congregation back to synagogue attendance. The synagogue which had theretofore become empty of worshippers, now became the place to which Jews came to listen and to enjoy the singing of the hazzan and the choir. Lewandowski worked in the midst of assimilationist Jews who considered themselves, first and foremost, one-hundred percent Germans and, only secondarily, of Mosaic persuasion. These people were receptive, in the main, to sentimental and romantic music and Lewandowski, sensitive as he was to the wants of his contemporaries, created in accordance with the needs of that period.

He was a true artist in his field, both theoretically and in practice, whose great talent is evident in the abundance of his work. He had the ability to build a magnificent structure with limited material

and to paint a magnificent canvass with a paltry supply of colors. Lewandowski became the standard of the musical prayer-service in Germany and many were the choirs that drew their nourishment from him. Sometimes over-romantic and at times a bit too sentimental, he could also be quite cold. Those of our prayers that express mighty emotional thoughts, very often lacked the necessary spiritual strength in Lewandowski's music. That heavenly dramaticism, the typical festive spirit of East-European Jewry was missing.

In recent generations there arose hazzanim and composers who fused the "emotional" music with the "systematic" and sought to develop a new musical form that would be loyal to the original spirit and character of Jewish religious music. The hazzan and the traditional nusah have remained as the pillars of "conservative" hazzanut, but even there the ground has become prepared for changes. These changes, however, will not have been motivated by a desire to assimilate or to abolish the original ideals of Jewish prayer.

On the heels of the division just mentioned, came a new, triple division, in American hazzanut. Hazzanut in the United States is now divided into three categories: Orthodox (traditional), Conservatime (very much akin to the "conservative" mentioned above) and Reform. Each division maintains a separate school for hazzanut in which the curriculum is based upon the current needs. The positive aspect of this state of affairs is that each tries to embellish the service in the synagogue with new creativity for the hazzan and the choir.

Hazzanut, despite the many changes in its form, function and importance, and notwithstanding the various divisions that have occurred through the years has remained an integral and most important part of the eternal spiritual treasures of Israel. Our own generation has not become orphaned. There are still, among the hazzanim of the Diaspora, many with beautiful voices; talented men who are very well versed in song and in music whose ability should not be minimized, from whose midst have come competent hazzanim to settle in the reborn State of Israel.

There is some sentient in Israel against those hazzanim of the **Diaspora** who do not know the meaning of the Hebrew prayers and who betray their ignorance in their interpretations; cry unnecessarily and at the wrong time; employ improper embellishments; include non-Jewish motifs or musical passages that are completely foreign to the essence of the particular prayer or piyut. What is mostly lacking in the hazzanut of the Diaspora is that spark of holiness that emerges from the innermost depths of the soul. That type of hazzanut is merely an external manifestation and can never

find its way to the hearts of the congregants. The congregation may find pleasure in the beautiful voice of the hazzan and in his graceful melody but is not otherwise impressed. That spirit of holy fervor that arouses the spirit and raises it aloft is sadly lacking.

The destruction of the Jewish centers of Europe and the establishment of the Jewish spiritual center in Israel saw the rejuvenation of hazzanut in the Holy Land. The eyes of hazzanut now look towards Israel whence will come the spiritual influence, including the hazzanic, to the remnants of our people throughout the world. All the changes and inversions of Rossi, Sulzer, Lewandowski and others in the Hazzanut of Europe will, of necessity, become obsolete where the State of Israel is concerned because that country is in and of the East.

Many new problems will, of course arise, the primary one of which will be that of the establishment and maintenance of a unified hazzanut. Israel itself is divided in three; Ashkenazic, Sefardic, and Yemenite, each with its own ***nusah,*** tradition, musical scales, separate directions and emphasis in its song. Sefardic hazzanut is built in. the main, upon the Arabic modes and upon the ***maquam*** which has seventeen steps; that is to say, the scale is not built upon half-steps as in Greek and European music, but upon third-steps. There is a basic difference in the intervals of Ashkenazic and Sefardie hazzanut. The difference in intervals becomes even more complicated where Yemenite hazzanut is concerned because they also utilize quarter-tones. Sefardic hazzanut places emphasis on its melodic line that is not based upon an evenly-distributed lyricism as in the hazzanut of the Ashkenazim. The day will indeed be a great one when we will be able to blend the Sefardic melody, the Yemenite rhythm and the Ashkenazic lyricism. The concept of "One People" will then include the field of music as well as all others.

Is the State of Israel ready for that great task? Israeli hazzanut is very far, today, from the attainment of that goal. The State, itself, has not as yet, produced one hazzan worthy of that name. The profession in Israel is devoid of those creative and organizational talents necessary for a proper solution of the problem. Israeli hazzanut now stands at the crossroads, faced with a serious crisis. There is no direction. no program, and no guiding hand. It seems as though hazzanut in the State of Israel has been doomed to failure.

There is, however, a sign of a small flicker of hope that some practical forces may be harnessed. There is a school for hazzanut in Jerusalem, sponsored by the Israel Institute of Religious Music and in Tel-Aviv there exists a seminary for the study of hazzanut, called "Selah," connected with the Bilu School. The latter graduates stu-

dents every year who know hazzanut in the Israeli spirit. With the passing of the dean of hazzanim in Jerusalem, Shlomo Rivlin, the gates of the school "Shirat Yisrael" were closed. Some of his former students, however, are preparing a campaign to re-open the school. There was an Academy for Hazzanut in Tel-Aviv, directed by the famous Hazzan Leib Glantz. Now that he has passed away, the fats of the Academy is unknown. The increased immigration of our brothers from the Arab lands brought many hazzanim to the country. Many among them occupy hazzanic positions in various synagogues. Sefardic and Yemenite hazzanut received an impetus in Israel and the Israeli book-stalls occasionally display samples of Sefardic hazzanut in the form of musical anthologies.

The great strides made in recent years in electronic and technical development have proven to be of inestimable value to hazzanut. Hazzanic compositions have been lifted bodily from their musical script and books of music that had heretofore been open only to musicians, and have been brought into the homes of all music lovers. The recording is now a cultural necessity. The invention of the phonograph posed a new religious question: Is the recording of prayers in keeping with our tradition *or is* it to be regarded as a desecration. Pinkas Minkovsky, the famous hazzan of Odessa remonstrated vehemently with those hazzanim who accepted invitations to record their prayers and compositions. He devoted an entire series of articles in various newspapers and periodicals to give vent to his deep feelings of pain and frustration at the profanation of the songs of our holy days. The record was victorious, however, and caused the broadening of the hazzanic horizon and universal acquaintance with that art.

There were hazzanim, masters of their profession, imaginative thinkers, who issued hundreds of recordings, becoming wealthy and famous in the Jewish world. The recorded library of Jewish music has continued to grow, encompassing hazzanut and the folk songs of the Ashkenazim, Sefardim, Yemenites, and others.

Although the present hazzanic modes in Israel represent a strange mixture, there is no doubt that time will bring about a more stable and harmonious blend in which each of the communities will be equitably represented. The new unified nusah that is to come will be very much like the Hebrew language that has come alive to unite all the segments of our nation. The unified *nusah in* hazzanut will complement the language in its efficacy as a binding and unifying agent.

(To be continued)

ROSH HASHANAH 1966

(The following is an exchange of letters between a young doctor now serving in Viet Nam and his hazzan, Moses J. Silverman of Chicago)

August 20, 1966

Dear Cantor Silverman:

My family and I have been members of the Anshe Emet congregation for many years and although you may not remember me, I'm sure that the name Poticha will be familiar to you.

I am presently in the army as a doctor with the 12th Evacuation Hospital. We have just received orders for shipment to Viet Nam and I find that the dates of Rosh Hashona will find us aboard ship. I have spoken with our Protestant Chaplain about the holidays and he has assured me that we will at least have prayer books. Interestingly enough, of the twenty doctors who will be on board, six of us are Jewish. We are all interested in having some type of holiday service despite the conditions and I'm sure that each of us appreciate the significance of the holidays this year perhaps more than ever before.

To me the holidays have never been as beautiful or inspiring as when I was in your congregation. The few years when I was at college and was forced to spend the holidays in Baltimore always seemed to lack something and to me those prayers sung in any other than your magnificent voice are somehow a little less meaningful.

I therefore wondered if you had recordings or tapes of any parts of the High Holiday services in your library and if so, you would be willing to loan them to me for this year. I know this is an unusual request, but I can assure you if it were possible this tiny congregation aboard ship in the mid-Pacific would be every bit as appreciative as the Anshe Emet congregation, which has been so inspired by your services all these years.

I know this request will reach you a little late because we are leaving here on August 28; however, we just received our orders. Because the time is so short, I called my father and asked him to call you late last week. If you do find anything we might borrow you can mail it to: Capt. Stuart M. Poticha, c/o 12th Evacuation Hospital, Fort Ord, California. I'm sure an air mail package would arrive in time.

Let me take this opportunity to thank you for anything you might be able to do and to wish you and your family a happy New Year. Even if I can't spend the holidays with you this year, you can

be sure that, God willing, next year will find me in my usual seat at Anshe Emet.

Sincerely yours,
STUART M. POTICHA, M. D.

August 22, 1966

Dear Stuart:

I can't begin to tell you how deeply moved I was by your very beautiful letter and I want to thank you most sincerely for the kind sentiments you expressed.

As soon as I read your letter I made arrangements for a few albums of records to be sent to you, air mail, which will contain a number of the chants of the Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur liturgy as sung by some of our great Cantors. In addition, I am sending you a recording of my own that has a number of selections on it, including my own rendition of Kol Nidre.

I want you to have these as my gift and with it goes my prayers for your continued good health. I shall look forward, God willing, to having you back with us at Anshe Emet in the not too distant future.

With affectionate regards.

Cordially,
MOSES J. SILVERMAN

August 27, 1966

Dear Cantor Silverman:

I have received your wonderful gift and can't tell you how pleased I am. You can never know how much having your Kol Nidre service means to me.

I find it difficult to adequately express my gratitude to you — someone I've respected and admired so much all these years. I think perhaps the best way to tell you how much this means to me and to all of us for that matter, will be to write you a description of what your service was like, both on board ship for Rosh Hashanah, and Yom Kippur in Viet Nam.

I say your service because I feel that this year more than ever before you are responsible for making these holidays the wonderful and exhilarating experience I know they will be.

Sincerely yours,
STUART M. PORTICHA, M, D.
Fort Ord, California

September 17, 1966

Dear Cantor Silverman:

At dusk on the evening of September 14, this ship, the General E. D. Pattrick, pulled into the harbor of the Vietnamese port of Quinhon. We are anchored in the harbor about three miles from shore and, despite the growing darkness, work began immediately to unload the ship into LCM landing craft which had pulled alongside.

As darkness fell we gathered on the top deck and gazed out across the shore. All through the night the land was illuminated by flares, and from the surrounding hills occasional flashes of light told us of the war. Several times we heard the crack of rifles, and watched as the tracer bullets flew across the water. Rosh Hashanah Eve 1966, the New Year, and our first look at the country we would live in this year.

For several days we had been working on a service which we would hold in the ship's Chapel. Before we left San Francisco, we had called the Chief Jewish Chaplain of the Sixth Army, and he had provided us with some supplies, among which were several abridged prayer books for the High Holidays. The ship's library contained one edition of the London prayer book, and using this we had planned our service.

First, we obtained a phonograph and a tape recorder from the ship's Special Services Department. Following the service in our prayer books, we tape recorded from all three records, until we had an orderly service.

At 0830 on the morning of September 15, all the Jews on board gathered in the Chapel on the fantail of the ship. Outside **the winches** and cranes were unloading cargo from the aft hold. There are 1000 men aboard this ship; we had ten Jews for our service.

There were two large crosses on the altar. We covered these with a Tallit and over this my purple Tallit sack. This was our Ark.

We began the service with the Shema which we sung in Hebrew and read in English. Then our electronic Cantor sang Mi Chomocho, in your voice. We read the Ashrei responsively in English and then followed in Hebrew as Koussevitsky sang it for us. And so the service went — some in the recorded voices of our great Cantors and some in Hebrew in ten different melodies from ten different Synagogues all over America. Kaddish, the Amidah, Ovinu Malkeinu — all those familiar prayers that meant so much more to me this Rosh Hashanah. The Torah reading was done by Dan Nixon, an internist from New York. He sang the blessings in Hebrew and read the Torah reading in English.

At the beginning of the Musaph Service I read Hinneni in English How many times I have heard that indescribably beautiful prayer as you have sung it. And this year I was blessed by feeling a tiny bit of the awful significance of its words:

"Oh, behold me, destitute of good works, trembling and terrified, in dread of Thee, who inhabitest the praises of Israel, standing in Thy presence to supplicate Thee, for Thy people Israel, who have deputed me; although I am not properly qualified for it, yet do I beseech Thee . . ."

Tears came to my eyes as I read the words for I knew that Jews all over the world would hear that prayer this day, but nowhere could it be more true than in our service. Trained as a surgeon, not a Rabbi, in my stumbling Hebrew I was trying to lead ten Jews in prayer. Would God hear my small voice in the midst, of all those glorious prayers which would reach Him from all over the world on this day. And yet, how important it was for us this year. How each man knew in his heart that this year he would face more danger than ever before, that this year he would need God more than ever before.

Un'sanah Tokef, B'rosh Hashanah — we read the prayer in Hebrew with Koussevitzky and then read them aloud in English. And we trembled as we heard those words as if hearing them for the first time ". . . who shall live and who shall die, who at the measure of man's days and who before it; who shall perish by fire and who by water, who by the sword . . ." We had all read the words before, but this. year it seemed as though they werewritten for us.

And so it was with every prayer, each word conveying its meaning to us as never before. And when we rose to hear you singing the Benediction, we all knew that this year we had been in a house of prayer, not just at the Synagogue. We added one last sentence to your benediction: "May God see fit to find us next year at this time in our own Synagogue with the people we love."

And then it was over. We stood around and smiled and shook hands. Some of the comments I remember:

"This year I really read the words instead of just saying them."

"It was the most moving service I can ever remember."

"I'm going to write home tonight. My mother will be happy I attended a service."

"It was the first Jewish service I've attended since I've been in the army."

"Boy, was it hot in there."

"It was just the right length."

"Poticha, if you're as good a surgeon as you are a Rabbi,

the 12th Evac. Hospital has nothing to worry about."

We all had one more treat in store for us. We had arranged with the ship's cook for a special meal. The Chaplain in San Francisco had supplied us with a bottle of wine for Kiddush and some bottled gefilte fish. We found a Polish corpsman who had worked in a Jewish bakery in New York and he, with the help of a doctor from Philadelphia, baked challe. The ship provided us with honey to put on the bread for "a sweet year."

Cantor, this was my Rosh Hashanah 1966. A holiday I will never forget. Without your help we never could have done it. How much it meant to all of us — your service here in Viet Nam. And PO from Nixon and Nelson and Baker and Wolf from New York; from Platt and Kessler from Philadelphia; from Cooley from Pittsburgh and from Kobel from Boston; from Litberg and Poticha from Chicago — "Thank you, Hazzan thank you!"

STUART M. POTICHA, M. D.

Quinhon, Republic of South Viet Nam
September 17, 1966

September 26, 1966

Dear Stuart:

Your letter which arrived a few days ago was not only one of the most moving I have ever received in my years at Anshe Emet, but one of the most inspiring.

I could go on at great length describing my reactions as I read your words, but I will merely say that my work as a minister in Israel can, at times, be frustrating.

Of course, this is due in large measure to the frailties of human nature — lack of understanding, disinterest in religious values, etc. However, when I am so fortunate and blessed as to receive a letter such as yours, I suddenly see a ray of sunshine which makes everything seem right with the world.

Stuart, it is I who should be thanking you. If, through the years that you have been part of my synagogue, if I have succeeded in giving to you just a little bit of spiritual understanding, it more than restores my faith in human-kind and gives me renewed strength. As I said before — I thank you!

God bless you and keep you well. I echo your sentiment that next year you will be back with us at Anshe Emet. Please write me whenever you can.

Affectionate good wishes,

MOSES J. SILVERMAN

TRENDS IN CONTEMPORARY JEWISH MUSIC*

PETER GRADENWITZ

A musical work is the product as much of the composer's own period and surroundings as of the creative faculties of the artist himself. While it is of little interest to search for nationalistic trends, for regional traits, or spiritual leanings in a work of art, it moot certainly does belong to its period as well as to the place where it was created. Many are the examples in music history of composers who were voluntarily or involuntarily transplanted to a new environment where the musical climate was different from that in which they grew up originally. Flemish composers who emigrated to Italy in the early 16th century sought the warmer and livelier atmosphere of the sunny south, and their music composed in Italy took on **a** different character. Beethoven and Brahms exchanged their cold birthplace cities in Northern Germany and went to live in cosmopolitan Vienna. Hungarian-born Liszt felt best in the musical atmosphere of Paris. Chopin abandoned his native Poland for France, as did Russian-born Strawinsky some eighty years later. And though characteristic features of style and expression link the early works of all these composers and their mature musical creations, profound changes in musical outlook and style, **were** naturally brought about by their adoption of a new country,

For these great masters of European music a change in domicile meant a new colouring of their works or a synthesis of various styles. For the Jewish composers who left their countries of birth to settle in the Land of Israel, to find a new home, the situation was slightly different.1 Not only did they come to a new continent, so to speak, which had nothing of the civilization and cultural tradition in which they had grown up, but they also soon acquired the feeling that they were called upon to contribute, by their very creative work, to the upbuilding o fthe old-new country. Their previous nations seemed curiously out of place in the new surroundings. Acclimatization was imperative. We speak especially of the earliest generations of immigrant composers — let us call them the pre-Kol-Israel and pre-Philharmonic Palestinian composers, whose struggle for artistic self-expression went on in an atmosphere of general pioneering, without much hope of finding an appreciative ear too soon.

*** From a paper delivered by the** author at the First **International Conference on Liturgical Music held in Jerusalem in July 1964 called by the Cantors Assembly of America.**

The earliest attempts at coming to terms with the newly conquered world were — we may say naturally — arrangements and elaborations of folklore. Some of these attempts were doomed to failure, as the composers applied western harmony and composition technique to tunes demanding quite a different treatment. And which were the tunes, really? The first aliyot of Eastern-European immigrants brought material collected by members of the Jewish Folklore Society of Petersburg, hassidic tunes and dances, and liturgical nusschaot from their countries. Little was in them of genuine Jewish, ancient Jewish heritage. Slav elements had changed melodies and rhythms. The first Palestinian composers, men like Rosowsky, Engel, set poem; by Bialik and other early poets to music in the vein of what they had known in their old lands, and the modem Hebrew limped along in false prosody for a long time till the metric rules of our reborn language were musically acknowledged. The next wave of immigration, from Central and Western European countries, brought children's songs and folktunes from countries with quite different musical traditions. Only in the late forties and early fifties did the African and Asiatic Jewish immigration acquaint the musicians and the public at large with folklore of really ancient heritage, belonging to and into our geographical region and cultural climate. It was not enough to hear recorded tunes or broadcast programmes; you had to see and hear the magic-carpet-Israelis in order to be able to know them, understand them.

By mentioning these three widely diverging folk groups, we have already pointed to the basic trends in present-day Israeli music, as far as the generations of old and middleaged composers, the generations of teachers, are concerned at least. The composers hailing from the Eastern-European countries, in which a profound Jewish renaissance had come under way, developed in the spirit of Eastern-European art-music and the feeling for Jewish values. The composers from Central and Western Europe had gone through the schools of modernism in the nineteen-twenties; their knowledge of Jewish folk music and Jewish life in general was much less developed than that of their colleagues from the eastern countries. The aliyot from these different zones did bring many composers to our country. Almost none came from the African and Asiatic countries — at least these were not creators of musical art works as the West understands them. But all musicians from the ancient countries are composers. A melody or. an instrumental tune is composed, that is to say, put together while it is performed, on the basis of most ancient formulas, and of handed-down ways of elaboration, ornamentation

and variation. Acquaintance with their singing and playing proved a welcome attraction to the western musicians with open ears and hearts, and while many among the public at large, accustomed to listen to Beethoven and Tschaikowsky, Chopin and Brahms, if not to the Beatles, dismiss genuine singing and playing of the kind as "non-European", "Primitive", "Monotonous", composers studying this music know they return to the roots of all musical art.

We can well say today that those among the Israel composers- and their number is growing — who have absorbed something of these roots, have come to understand the power of expression, the attraction of variety, the intellectual as well the sensual pleasure of singing and playing as the musicians of ancient traditions do, are the ones who seem most interested in their works from the point of view of observers in the highly-developed world of contemporary music. A synthesis has been reached in some Israeli compositions, of East and West, of the traditional and the modern, of the rule-bound and the experimental-free.

(As illustrations there followed works by J. Stutschewsky, Paul Ben-Haim, Josef Tal, Bernard Bergel, A. U. Boscovich, M. Avidom, M. Seter, on tapes and records.)

I should really have had the time to devote more examples and illustrations to the lesser known and the younger Israeli composers. And I very much regret that I do not have it this morning. Especially as only a few of these younger men have had their compositions performed abroad yet. But let me summarize in a few words where the principal direction now lies, where the Israeli composer searches for new ways and means of composing these days.

The composers whose works you have heard in excerpts, have given impetus, direction, instruction and example to the younger generations. And there is one important figure, who for technical reasons — unavailability of the kind of music I should have liked to illustrate — could not be included in this morning's examples: Oedoen Partos. In his most recent works, it is Partos who has most successfully blended tradition and modernism, East and West. He has thoroughly studied the music of tone-rows, serial music, as practised by most of the important composers of present-day western music, and he has learned of the deep-rooted parallelism between the western conception of tone-rows and the most ancient tone — and melody-models known as raga in the Indian world and as maqamat in the Arab Near-East. His instrumental compositions, like the Viola Concerto No. 2, the quintet for flute and strings "Maqamat", the "Images" for large orchestra, and "Visions" for

chamber orchestra, are all proof of artful synthesis and combination of Near-Eastern elements and modern techniques of elaboration. And this is the way paved for new generations of composers who have left nationalism behind and are putting Israel on the map of musically creative countries, of general artistic interest.

Among the younger composers, we must mention Ben-Zion Orgad, Yehoshua Lakner, Abel Ehrlich and Yizhak Sadai — as musicians who have tried to come to grips with the musical world of the East. Still younger are Ami Ma'ayani, Noam Sheriff. And in the music academies of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, you can find a number of composers whose names will probably soon be heard of in your own countries.

No mention has been made here of the lighter sides of musical composition, which — as may be expected — follow similar paths, if in a simpler way — as the vocal and instrumental music of the composers mentioned. Best-known, in the field of lighter symphonic music and oratorio is Marc Lavry, a master of his craft in his own right, whose works are often performed in Israel and in the world at large.

Time is running out, but I do not want to close this session without mentioning a singular tribute paid to Israeli music by a major organizations abroad. I speak of the magnificent series of recordings made by His Master's Voice in London, with Sir Laurence Olivier reading portions from the Holy Bible on 12 Long-Playing records, and a musical background — preludes, interludes, postludes, and illustration — of what is termed "Music from the Holy Land". The music is by Paul BenHaim, Josef Tal, Oedoen Partos, Josef Kaminski, Karel Salomon, and by Habib Touma, from Nazareth, a graduate from the Tel Aviv Music Academy.

It is often asked why so little is heard of sacred music in Israel, whose Temple music once inspired the civilizations of the ancient world and provided the roots for the sacred music of the West. There are many scholars and musicians who agree that the study and stylish use of Bible cantillation opens the way to the real foundations of all Jewish music but as many others feel that the msny-coloured traditions in liturgical music-though derived from the same basic roots-have during history been subject to pollution, assimilation and acculturation and there could be no renaissance of Jewish sacred music before a thorough cleansing by way of autoemancipation.

The various individual scholars and some of the institutes in Israel make material available in abundance to students and musi-

cians but while quite a number of Israeli composers are genuinely interested in the Bible from both its religious and historical aspects, tie find only a very few works of importance in the field of Israeli liturgical music. In some instances the composers have been inspired to write liturgical music by way of commissions. Cantor David Putterman was the first to commission a complete cycle of liturgical compositions from Israel for a memorable Friday Night Service at the Park Avenue Synagogue in New York, recently Cantor Meisels followed suit. But who in Israel would ask an Israeli composer to compose music for the synagogue? Israeli composers stand aloof from the synagogue as they have no opportunity to make their voice heard there.

The religious leaders have no wish to attract musicians and music loving public — as did the Church at the heyday of its power in the European middle-ages and down to the baroque era, and is doing again today –. Paradoxically enough, it was the socialist kibbutz movement which first mobilised poets and composers to give new literary and musical form to the traditional Jewish Holydays — Passover, the New Year, Yom Kippur, Sukkot.

The ban on music in the synagogue, so often interpreted as derived from the mourning for Jerusalem's Holy Temple, was really historically based on the teachings of an art-suspicious period. The Christian Church banned excessive music because it reminded the Church of the Jewish, that is to say heathen practice in King Solomon's Temple. The Islam authorities banned music as it detracted attention. The Jews found a sentimental reason. But now, while the Holy Temple has not been rebuilt yet, we should not mourn in our own land, and should not hesitate to return to the synagogue the deep spiritual meaning, social significance, and artful splendour that was the Temple's in the golden age of ancient Israel. Only then will Israel liturgical music have a future.

HASHIRIM ASHER LISH'LOMO

This month marks the culmination of a scholarly and musical endeavor which had its genesis in 1623. In that year Salamon Rossi issued a collection of thirty-three vocal compositions entitled, HASHIRIM ASHER LISH'LOMO (The Songs of Solomon), settings of Hebrew texts taken from the Old Testament and from the North Italian synagogue liturgy of the seventeenth century. The music, scored for three, four, five, six, seven and eight voices, is mostly polyphonic in texture and suggests the style of Rossi's Venetian and Roman contemporaries.

The eight printed part books which serve as sources for this new edition came from the presses of the Venetian publishers Pietro and Lorenzo Bragadini. The well-known Ferrarese Hebrew scholar, Rabbi Leone da Modena, was the editor of this work. He was apparently a competent musician since very few errors are to be found in these part books. Rossi himself may have participated in preparing the edition for the press.

HASHIRIM ASHER LISH'LOMO is the first printed music that appeared with Hebrew text. No scholarly edition of this unique work has been available so far; the practical edition published by S. Naumberg, Paris, 1876, is neither a complete nor a trustworthy one by today's standard.

The complete text, which includes 428 pages of music, is printed in two volumes. Volume 1 contains the settings for three, four, five and six voices; Volume 2, the remaining compositions for seven and eight parts. The editor uses modem clefs, but indicates the original clefs and time signatures.

The publication includes critical notes regarding both text and music, transliteration and translations of the Hebrew text, reproductions of title and text pages of the original Venetian edition, and a piano reduction intended only for rehearsals.

A third text volume will contain facsimile reproductions and an English translation of the complete prefatory material of the original printing. It will include detailed commentaries by Joel Newman and Milton Feist on the liturgical, historical, and stylistic aspects of Rossi's HASHIRIM. The important responsum by Rabbi Leone da Modena favoring the performance of choral music in the synagogue, the approbation of this point of view by Venetian rabbis, are included as well as Leone da Modena's significant statement that the composer's copyright be safeguarded_

This edition is being published by the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in cooperation with the Cantors Assembly of America. The funds for much of the research and for all the publication costs were provided from the Publication Fund of the Cantors Assembly of America. The project was begun in 1953 thanks to the special interest and efforts of Hazzan David J. Putterman, then Executive Vice President of the Assembly.

The project lagged for some years due to a shortage of funds. Finally, in 1965, under the direction of the Assembly's current president, Hazzan Saul Meisels, the project was revitalized and completed. At the request of Hazzan Solomon Mendelson, Chairman of the Publication Committee and Hazzan Samuel Rosenbaum, Executive Vice President the necessary additional funds were made available through a grant to the Assembly by Mr. Charles Avnet.

PREFACE OF VOLUME I

However modest the place of Salamon Rossi may appear in the general history of music, his importance in Jewish musical history can scarcely be overestimated. His unique effort to introduce Western musical practices into the Synagogue secures this place. Though his experiment may be viewed as only a belated manifestation of what may be termed a Renaissance Exubrance-a n attempt to show that the Synagogue could sustain what the Church had created-it was a noble try. It would appear that Rossi undertook this work with only the slightest appreciation of the innate conservatism of the Jewish service. More serious perhaps was his profound misapprehension of what the place of music is in a service as thoroughly individualistic and egalitarian as traditional Jewish worship. In any case, his book of synagogue compositions, ***Hashirim Asher LiSh'lomo,*** which appeared in Venice in 1623, came too late. Italian Jewry had passed the peak of its creative period. The progressive Stranglehold of the ghettos proved too strong for Jewish creativity and, as has happened frequently in Jewish history, there was nobody to succeed him or to carry his work forward.

Rossi's artistic fate is not unlike that of the thirteenth century poet, Suzkint von Trimberg-the only known Jewish minnesinger-whose portrait is familiar to us from the ***Manessiche Handschrift.*** Roth men were unique in their times. Neither had any significant artistic antecedents, nor did either of them produce any immediate progeny. Their work stopped with them. Though there were many Jewish poets who wrote in the vernacular outside of Germany from the fourteenth century onward, more than three hundred years were to pass before a composer with remotely the talent approaching — that of a Rossi would again turn his attention to the synagogue. For the Jewish composer of the twentieth century Rossi's example poses many significant problems still to be solved.'

Turning to the music, we may say with confidence that some of it is absolutely first rate no matter what standards one invokes. All of it is masterfully wrought. Rossi's synagogue music must be given a very high place in the total oeuvre of this man whom the late Alfred Einstein aptly termed "a universal composer ***en miniature."*** We might take exception to the word ***"miniature" with*** reference to the ***Hashirim.*** A composition such as Rossi's setting of

Psalm 137 can be placed beside the most passionate utterances of a Monteverdi, and Rossi's eight-part echo epithalamium demonstrates both the charm and the intellectual subtleties of the best of Lassus. From a practical point of view, this new edition is neither archival grubbing or quaint antiquarianism. This is music-vital, attractive, the product of a refined mind and the result of high socioethical aspirations.

A final word about the genesis of this edition. My own interest in Rossi goes back some thirty-five years, when my father brought me a copy of the Naumbourg-D'Indy edition of 1877, revealing to me a Jewish world that I had not dreamed of. When I came to the Cantors Institute some fifteen years ago, one of my first interests was to bring out a reliable modern edition of the Hashirim Fritz Rikko was placed in charge, and we are finally witnessing the results. Much thanks must be given him for his work, his patience and his persistence. We are also very grateful to the Cantors Assembly of America for their continued support of this project, and to Milton Feist for his ever-generous help.

Hugo Weisgall

SALAMON ROSSI

HASHIRIM ASHER LISH'LOMO

(The Songs of Solomon)

THIRTY-THREE PSALMS, SONGS AND HYMNS SET TO MUSIC FOR THREE, FOUR, FIVE, SIX, SEVEN AND EIGHT VOICES

EDITED BY FRITZ RIKKO

WITH A PREFACE BY HUGO WEISGALL

VENICE 1623

Alphabetical Index

*Performance possible without Bass, as suggested by Rossi's indication.

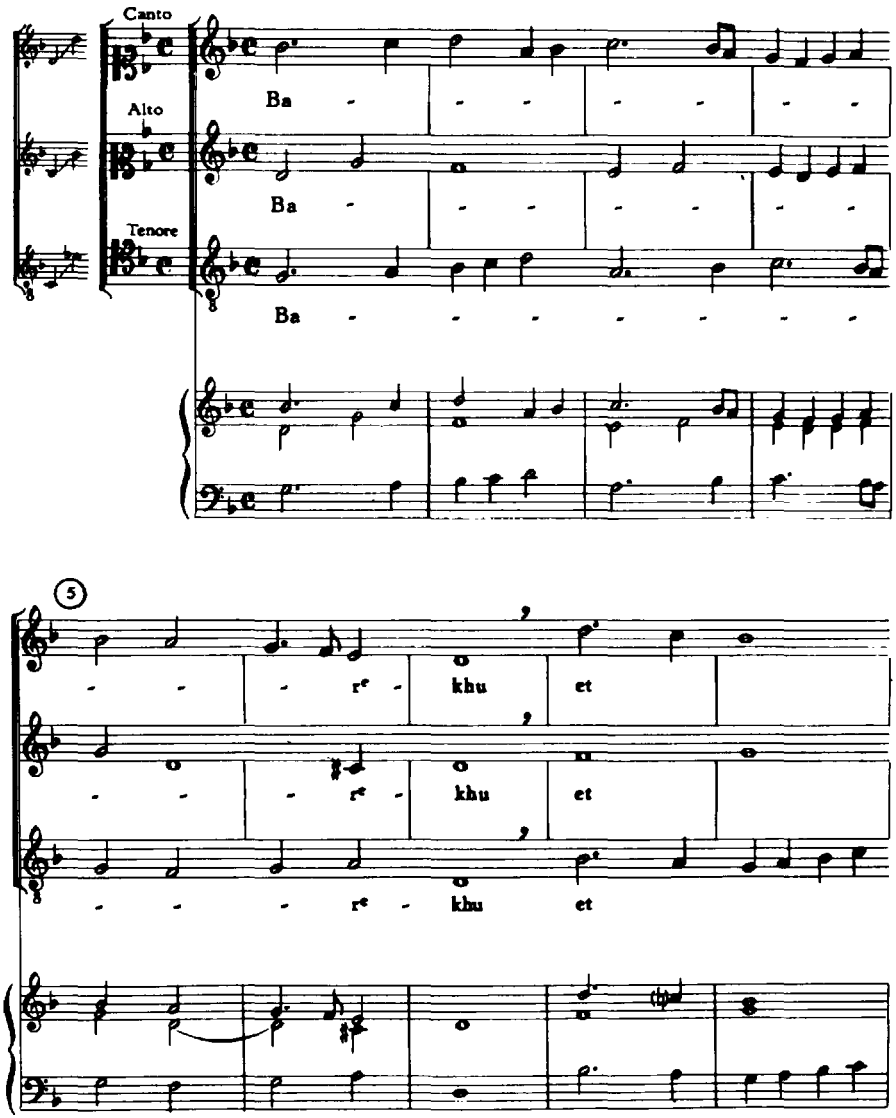
ORIGINAL TITLE PAGE--BOLOGNA COPY

3

BAR^{e}KHU

בָּרְכוּ אֶת יְיָ הַמְבוֹרָךְ׃ והציבור עונים׃ בָּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְבוֹרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד׃

Bless the Lord who is to be praised.
Praised be the Lord who is blessed for all eternity.


Canto
Alto
Tenore
Ba
Ba
Ba
5
re
khu
et
re
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et
re
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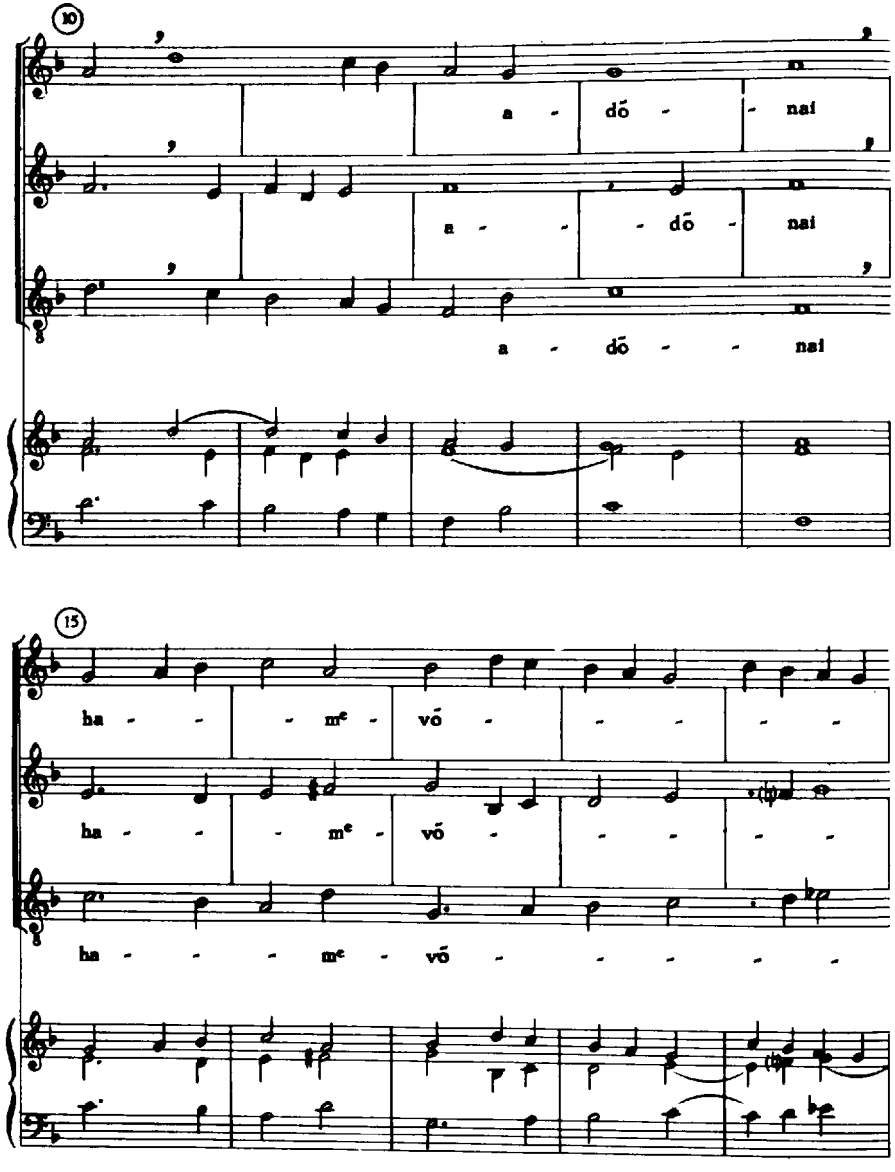
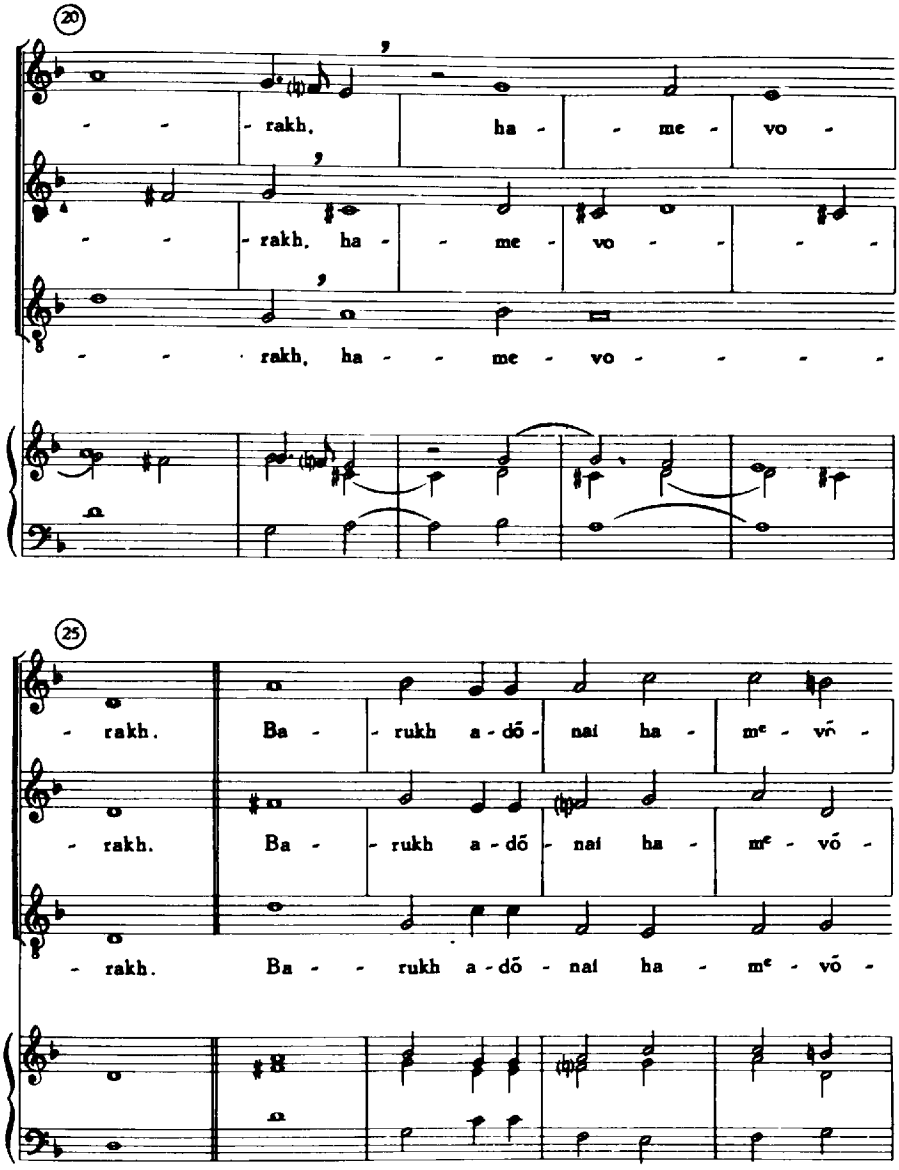
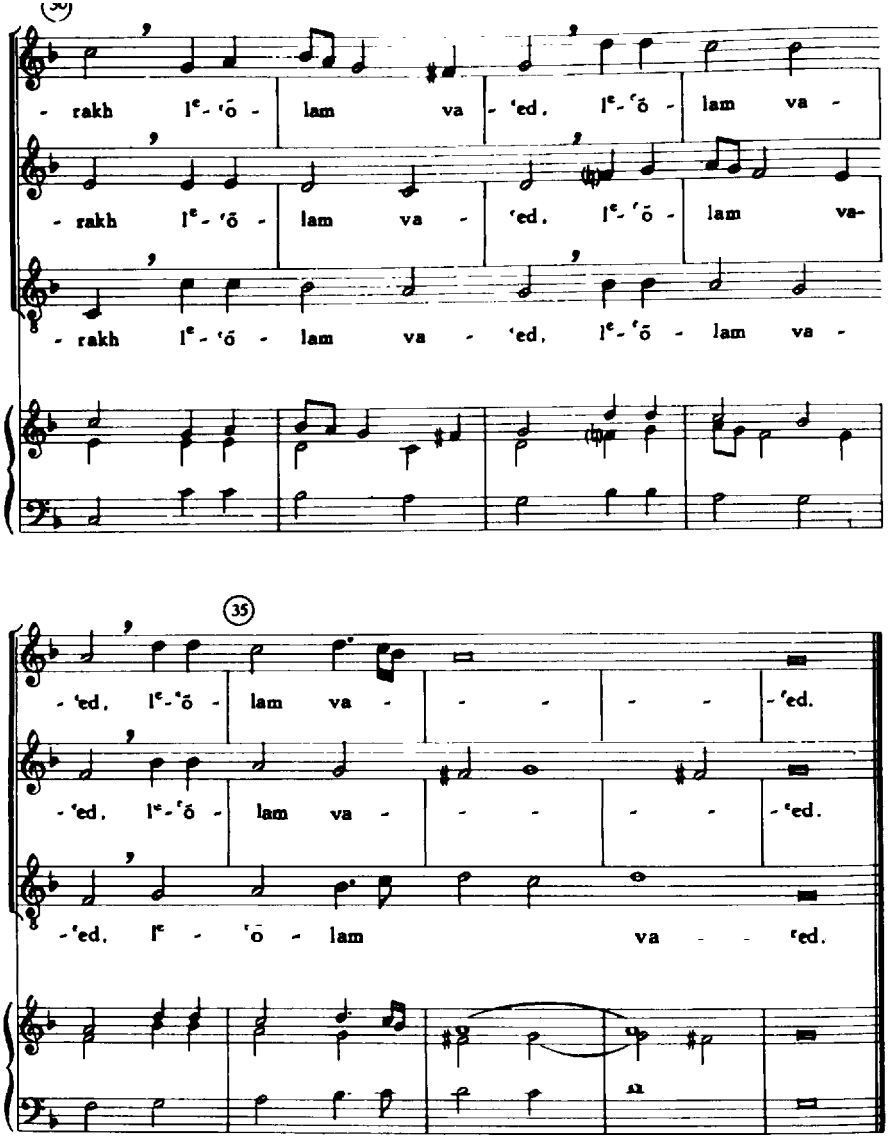
et


10
a - dŏ - nai
a - - dŏ - nai
a - dŏ - - nai
15
ha - - mᵉ - vŏ
ha - - mᵉ - vŏ
ha - - - mᵉ - vŏ


20
rakh, ha - me - vo -
rakh, ha - me - vo - - -
rakh, ha - - me - vo - - - -
25
rakh. Ba - rukh a - dō - nai ha - me - vō -
rakh. Ba - rukh a - dō - nai ha - me - vō
rakh. Ba - - rukh a - dō - nai ha - me - vō -


30
- rakh l^e- 'ō - lam va - 'ed. l^e- 'ō - lam va -
- rakh l^e- 'ō - lam va - 'ed. l^e- 'ō - lam va-
- rakh l^e- 'ō - lam va - 'ed. l^e- 'ō - lam va -
35
- 'ed. l^e- 'ō - lam va - - - - - 'ed.
- 'ed. l^e- 'ō - lam va - - - - - 'ed.
- 'ed. l^e - 'ō - lam va - - 'ed.

PIRKEI HAZZANUT

by MAX WOHLBERG

When the view ahead contracts, one instinctively looks back. Thus the aging are wont to reminisce.

Having just begun my fortieth year of uninterrupted service in the Cantorate, I hope to be forgiven for indulging in a bit of retrospection on matters peripheral to our profession, but not without some interest to students of the cantoral mores of the recent past.

In my early teens, possessed of a not unpleasant voice, I often wished to study music seriously. However, in the oppresively pious Yeshivas in which I studied, there was neither time nor opportunity for such study.

During one of my infrequent visits at home I approached our local Hazzan X, who was a most competent cantor, to permit me to attend his choir rehearsals and, for a fee, to teach me music. His curt refusal he justified with the fact that my stay at home would not be of sufficiently long duration to make it wortlnvhile to involve himself in the matter, and on the not-too-well-veiled intimation that if I had any musical ability at all it was probably not worthy of cultivation.

After extended pleading he referred me to one of his tenors, who commenced to give me music lessons. It did not take me too long to realize that my teacher was himself in need of some music instruction.

Hazzan X's repertoire included two Yiddish songs which I was most anxious to learn. Somehow, he was always too busy to teach them to me. I managed to memorize the melody and asked him to say the words slowly, so that I could write them down. Unable to shake me off, he at last began to recite the words hurriedly, while he walked back and forth with me, pencil and paper in hand, trailing him. I fmally did succeed in learning the songs.

When, years later, I came to the United States I had practically forgotten about X. Subsequently, his son arrived here and became a prominent conductor.

Some of my readers may remember a Cantor Kantor of Cleveland (no relation to Cantor Kantor of Brooklyn). It seems that a cantorial position in Cleveland was vacant. Kantor, entrusted with the task of finding a suitable candidate, went to the Hazzanim Farband where I was recommended to him. He arranged for my visit to Cleveland and came to hear me on Friday evening. My davening was anything but successful. Somehow nothing seemed to work and

I was truly remorse-stricken at having disappointed Kantor. ***Shuhris*** on the morrow was better and Musaf quite satisfactory.

After many weeks and many more candidates, I received a call from Cleveland informing me that the congregation, then at its annual meeting, had elected me. By this time, due mainly to the promptings of my family, I had decided to remain in the position I then held. I promptly declined the offer.

Within the hour I received two more calls, each time raising the salary offered me. I, however, stuck to my refusal.

Months later I learned that the congregation couldn't agree on any of the other candidates. They, therefore, decided to engage the second-best applicant solely for the High Holidays. He was Hazzan ***X.***

* * * * * *

Chairman of the placement committee at the Hazzanim Farband at that time was the famous composer of popular Yiddish songs (Zokhrenu L'Hayim, etc.) the now nonagenarian Abraham Singer. At his urging I applied to fill a vacancy in a most distinguished congregation at a considerable distance from New York. Since I used to boast of the fact that I was elected for every position that I applied for, my ego received a sharp reprimand at never having heard again from this congregation.

The fact that the applicants following me were legion and the contest was not decided for many months somewhat soothed my injured pride. It was also comforting to know that the congregation I then served was anxious for me to stay.

It was, as I recall, two or three years later at a board meeting of the Farband, when Cantor Singer, speaking of the irresponsibility of some congregations, dropped an off-hand remark about "that congregation that called 2-3 weeks before Selihot, saying they wanted Wohlberg." He, of course, told them it was too late and wouldn't even bother to tell Wohlberg about their call.

I sat stunned, not knowing whether to bawl him out for making so important a decision without even consulting me, or to be pleased that I had, after all, been selected. While I was deciding what to do, the subject was changed and I haven't returned to it until this moment.

* * * * * *

My Father, the son of a cantor, was a fine scholar, a cultured gentleman, a poor businessman, and had, I was told, a sweet voice. In my birthplace in Czechoslovakia (Carpatho-Russia) there were three places of worship in close proximity. There was the large Syna-

gogue where the cantor and choir held forth. Nearby was the spacious Bes Hamedrash, where the more scholarly worshipped. Facing it was the kloyz, the province of the Hassidim. The Rav davened mostly in Bes Hamedrash, occasionally in kloyz and three-four times a year in the Synagogue. My Father davened all year in ***kloyz,*** but on the High Holidays he donated his services as Hazzan of the Bes Hamedrash. He, I was told, sang beautifully but, as I was two-and-a-half when he died, I have no recollection of him.

This past summer my older brother, in the company of some of his rabbinic colleagues, visited a number of countries behind the iron curtain. He also made a flying trip to our birthplace to visit ***kever avos*** During this journey he chanced on two who well-remembered hearing our Father chant the High Holiday service and gladly recorded on my brother's tape recorder some of the melodies my Father sang more than half-a-century ago.

It is indeed, I mused, a miraculous world when a slender tape can pierce through iron curtains, span across continents, overcome decades and bring me the songs of my Father.

I plan to teach them to our son and, if God gives me years, to our beloved grandson.

REVIEW OF NEW MUSIC

B'KOL ZIMRA: ***A Collection of Jewish Choral Music for Mixed Voices (SATB) A Cappella by*** **Tzipora H. Jochsberger, Mercury Music Corporation, N. Y.**

Mercury Music is giving away a bargain to say the least. Tzipora Jochsberger's collection of arrangements that are useable and that will be fun to sing, all for $2.50.

If one of the moot points in this short review seems crassly commercial to those who might expect something *more* scholarly in a Music Journal which is non-partisan in outlook and interests, please note that this reviewer cannot remember an occasion in recent times when Jewish Music was priced more realistically and more in keeping with most chorus and synagogue music program budgets. There will be no need for the hard-pressed choral director to purchase one copy of *"Bekol Zimra"* and rush to the nearest duplicating machine to run off copies for his 30, 40 or 50 voice choir. And, there are pieces included in the work that will go beautifully at concerts or during services. For instance, *Anim Zemirot. Karev Yom, Ein Kelohenu, Tzur Mishelo* and Yigdal.

Miss Jochsberger shows the fine hand of the well-grounded musician and arranger. One wishes for a little more variety and hopes that the successor to this book, as there surely must be, will include more secular numbers.

SIX SHORT HEBREW ANTHEMS (Based on Tradition) : ***For Solo, Mixed Voices and Organ (or Piano)*** **by Herbert Fromm. Transcontinental Music Corporation, N. Y.**

Mr. Fromm has continued in the tradition which he himself has set before in his "Madrigals" of transmuting simple melodic anthems into ideal chamber pieces for a small group of voices. These settings, but in reality they are no longer merely settings but logical musical pieces unto themselves, go but partly toward the eventual formalizing of a substantial catalogue of music that practicing hazzanim and music directors may program for chamber concerts and programs of Jewish Music that will command the legitimate musical abilities of the performers and the educated sensibilities of the modern listener and that will at the same time be definitely "Jewish"; of Jewish origin, set in a contemporary Jewish manner by a fine Jewish composer.

Anim Z'mirot, Al Tim Yaacov Tsur Mishelo, Adir Hu (a fine rousing setting) Molad'ti and *Eshet Chayil* comprise this delightful chamber suite.

SHIRAT ATIDEINU: ***A Service of Friday Evening Worship for Youth Chorus*** **by Arthur Yolkoff. Transcontinental Music Publications. N.Y.**

Beautifully and artistically covered, Arthur Yolkoff's first major publication excludes all of the freshness of a long awaited spring. Commissioned by Hazzan Jerome Kopmar of Congregation Beth El and his Junior Choral Society in Akron, Ohio, this Service was premiered at the Cantors Assembly Convention of last year. Based upon traditional nusah; cantillation and folk-like motives originated by the composer it gives great promise for the future of similar works written for children because of the great demand upon the publisher to make this work available.

Written in a clean and easy to sing style the music reflects the composer's own ability and great experience in

working with voices. The melodic line is charming and mirrors the simplicity and innocence inimitable to children's voices. The service in general is guileless and untainted. It offers an interesting blend of traditional, nusah oriented melodies with an Israeli-upbeat, all blended together with a fine choice of medieval (French?) harmonies. One feels called upon to comment upon Hazzan Yolkoff's studies at the Cantors Institute as having played an important part in his musical make-up and understanding of the varied traditions of our people. *Yiyasker koh'ka.*

HASHKIVENU: ***For Cantor and Mixed Voices*** **by Maurice Goldman. Transcontinental Music Publications, N. Y.**

Transcontinental Music has done a fine service in reprinting this practical and dramatic setting of the prayer by Maurice Goldman. It is with sadness that one notes the present unavailability of great works in our Jewish Music Library because of the lack of willingness of publishers to re-invest monies in works that have been sold out and that are no longer available to us. For example, the fine series of commissioned works by the Park Avenue Synagogue and Hazzan David Putterman, which were bound in one famous volume by G. Schirmer, Inc. is no longer available, as indeed are almost all of the works of Lazare Saminsky and the other fine services of Achron, the Friday Eve Service of Jacoby and the works of Zilberts.

This "Hashkivenu" is a welcome addition to our current literature and one which will surely regain popularity.

AGADA: ***For SATB*** **Arranged by Harry Coppersmith. Transcontin-*** ***ental*** **Music Publications, N. Y.**

From a melody by A. Karchevsky, this setting will be a useful one. The harmonization seems to be slightly out of style with what one might expect with this vintage song and the juxtaposing of "modem" chords with the "traditional" ones makes this arrangement uneven stylistically. The basses also seem to be at the extreme depth one might reasonably expect from an amateur section. This arrangement will go well with good voices.

TORAT EMET: ***For SATE.*** **Arranged by Harry Coppersmith. Transcontinental Music Publications, N. Y.**

This choral transcription by Mr. Coopersmith is effective and will "work". Although one might get the feeling of perhaps too many eighth notes it will be a good choral experience for the amateur choir and its director.

C. D.